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ARPÁD SZAKOLCZAI

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BADIA FIESOLANA, SAN DOMENICO (FI)

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European University Institute
Badia Fiesolana
I – 50016 San Domenico (FI)
Italy

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1. Introduction

It is one of the few unquestioned axioms in sociology that the two founding fathers of the discipline as we know it are Emile Durkheim and Max Weber. This fact has remained practically unaltered since Parsons had published his seminal work in 1937, in spite of the time that has passed since and the amount of debates to which it gave rise. The only major change was that by now Marx has become generally accepted as the third major founding figure, forming thus a holy trinity, as confirmed by the representative works of Giddens (1976) and Habermas (1984).

In this dominant concensus, the minor fact that Durkheim and Weber respectively ignored each other's work, though they were contemporaries and knew about each other, has escaped attention until 1966 when Edward Tiryakian called attention to the point (Tiryakian 1966). Since then, a minor discussion has been taken place (Steiner 1992), but it did not succeed to elevate the issue beyond the conventional academic debate on "influences". Quite recently it was still referred to as "the strange Weber-Durkheim nonrelation" (Nipperdey 1993, p. 78).

The aim of this paper is to shift this issue at the center of interest by claiming that seen from the right angle it addresses the status and identity of sociology as a discipline. It intends to do so by providing a novel conceptual framework and by introducing certain facts that so far have been overlooked. Concerning the latter, it has been often asserted that the mutual lack of recognition was due to the different national and disciplinary backgrounds of Durkheim and Weber. There is nothing surprising in the fact, so it is argued, that at the beginning of the 20th century, and just before WWI, a French sociologist and a German economic historian ignored each other. However, the picture would become different if it were the case that the most important formative experiences of the two thinkers were quite close, indeed almost identical. Concerning the former, the paper will introduce the concept of a "formative" or "founding experience".

The paper intends to reconsider the foundations of sociology, an issue that has received some attention lately (Baehr and O'Brien, 1994). It aims therefore high. However, it order to make its points, it has to go very low, into the level of small detail. There are three reasons for this. First, so much has been written on the Pasonian synthesis that it is not possible to say something new with the help of the elegant manipulation of a few basic ideas. Second, however, something new must be written as the problems so far have not been solved. The main reason is that the solution is to be found not at the level of ideas, but in their conditions of possibility. This requires a close reading of neglected or minor texts and a patient pursuit of often almost imperceptible biographical and contextual details. Third, the paper will present and apply a new methodology, based especially on the writings of Weber, Voegelin, Foucault and Victor Turner. The aim is to root ideas in experiences that problematise what has been taken for granted and stamp the track of thought, constituting a "positive unconscious" that defines the possibilities and the limits of thought and that cannot be overcome without a difficult and long reflexive work of thought upon itself.

Therefore, in case the reader feels lost in detail or is uncertain about the reasons to pursue them, it may be appropriate to start the paper at its conclusions.

2. On founding experiences

Today, in the age of post-modernism and anti-foundationalism, it seems to be particularly untimely and inappropriate to talk about "foundations". However, on closer inspection, the discourse of anti-foundationalism turns out to have rather specific targets. It either attacks the idea of a singular act of intellectual foundation or the claim that the foundations are just out there as things existing in reality, only to be discovered and represented in a system. This paper, however, neither refers to founding theoretical acts, nor does it claim that there are objective bases for a science of society to be formalised and systematised. Rather, it wants to focus

attention upon certain founding experiences. The way the concept "experience" is used in the paper requires some explanation.

First of all, as the historical record shows, all major break-points in the history of Western thought are associated with the works of single individuals. Take away Socrates and Plato, Jesus and Paul, Augustine and Luther, Machiavelli, Hobbes and Descartes - only nine persons during the span of over two thousand years -, and the whole history of Western thought becomes unintelligible, indeed impossible to conceive. Second, the works of all these thinkers were very close to their lives, their own personal experiences. They were "empirically rooted", were elaborations and reflections upon the events and experiences they have themselves encountered. Of this, there is a telling proof. While the contemporary, and much critised, concept of a "foundation" involves a closed and complete intellectual system, a theoretical treatise, the most important founding moments of thought were often associated with individuals who failed to write down a single word, and almost without exception were contained in types of documents that are today considered as of limited scholarly value, like biographies and autobiographies, dialogues and letters, commentaries and meditations, stories about acts committed and prescriptive manuals. (1)

Third, it is not enough to state that these works were closely based upon personal experiences. The experiences that proved to be strong enough to become the driving force for the formation of significant streams and traditions of thought had to be of a special kind. They had to possess two important characteristics. The first was external. All persons mentioned lived in periods of major socio-political upheavals that could be defined as wholesale dissolutions of order. Socrates and Plato lived through the crisis and collapse of the polis (Athens), Jesus and Paul were born shortly after the same thing had happened to the Republic (Rome), while Machiavelli witnessed the collapse of republican government in Italy (Florence). These three periods are cases of a highly scarce type, as these were the final moments of the only three instances of democratic government in world history until

the modern period. Augustine was a contemporary to the collapse of the Roman Empire, Luther came in the final stage of the waning of the Middle Ages (the collapse of the Church), while Descartes and Hobbes lived at the end of a long period of religious and civil wars, during the thirty years' war (the collapse of the Holy Empire) and the glorious revolution. One could argue that none of them were preoccupied with theory building for its own sake. They were rather thinking about the way to put an end to chaos and reflecting on the reasons for the collapse. It was exactly this experiential concerns that gave their works such a solid foundation and a resounding effect.

Second, in most cases, the origins of theses works can be assigned to a single moment, a decisive experience. Plato's experience of the death of Socrates, the conversion of Paul and Augustine, the illumination of Descartes in the stove-heated room are too well-known to require a detailed description. It is important, however, to clarify one point. Such experiences are often associated exclusively with mystical or supernatural phenomena, and this is used to discredit by definition any reference to the experiential basis of thought. This is only one of the strategies employed to normalise such experiences and deny their validity, the other being the exaggerated emphasis put on matters of doctrine and dogma. In this manner, the founding moments of human thought are taken away from the human beings who experienced them or who could do so again, and are assigned to distant inaccessible supernatural forces and normalised and systematised creeds. In fact, the techniques of normalisation are the same for modern rational thought as well, one only needs to replace the emphasis on transcendence with "universality" and the emphasis on dogma with the predilection for "system", "general theory" and "method". In both cases, the possibility of experience and understanding is sacrificed for the sake of a repetitive, ceremonial knowledge, justified by the claim of "responsibility". (2)

Such arguments, however, are never able to explain the extraordinary impact these experiences have gained. It is a matter of historical fact that it was the personal experience of a single

moment that enabled Saulus to expand a small heretical Jewish sect into the most powerful religion of the world, or Augustine to write an autobiography - an innovation that had to wait almost 1000 years to find a follower. (3) The history of thought, read in the proper manner, bears a striking witness to the human power to experience life, amidst the most adverse conditions, as opposed "structural" or "materialistic" determinism.

All these examples, one could say, belong to the remote past. However, it is not difficult to find more recent, even contemporary cases. Far from being uncharacteristic of our age, there is rather a pronounced accentuation, an unprecedented emphasis on biographical and autobiographical references in thought since the end of the 19th century. The references will again be restricted to the best known and most important cases.

Starting with literature, the two most important sources of inspiration for the modern novel, both being at once highly autobiographical and close to reflexive thought — the *Ulysses* of James Joyce and *Remembrance of Things Past* of Marcel Proust have been traced to a very specific source: the events of a single day in one case, a distinct smell and the childhood experiences it evoked in the other (O'Connor, 1993). But singular moments also proved to be decisive for some of the most important historical projects of the century. This applies to the more encompassing globals works of Toynbee and Spengler, just as two uniquely innovative and influential single historical theses of the century, Huizinga's idea about the twilight of the Middle Ages and Pirenne's insight concerning the link between Mahomet and Charlemagne. (4)

Moving further, the same could be stated about philosophy. Nietzsche's most important work and idea, the *Zarathustra* and the concept of the eternal return could be traced back to a singular experience he had in Sils Maria, "6000 feet beyond man and time." (1966, p. 295). Edmund Husserl, in his *Cartesian Meditations* , renewed a genre, "meditations", that is very close to personal experience, and that has fallen into oblivion in Western

philosophy since the time of Descartes. The most important works of William James are rooted in a spiritual crisis he had in 1869 and an experience of 1898 (James, 1952, p. v-vi). Eric Voegelin realised that it is not possible to write about the history of ideas, it is necessary to reconstruct the experiential basis of thought, while reading a work of Schelling (Voegelin 1989, p. 68). Michel Foucault's whole work has been based on the experience of reading Nietzsche's *Untimely Meditations* in 1953 (Pinguet 1986), while *The Order of Things* was rooted in a single laugh he had while reading an essay of Borges (Foucault 1973, p. xv).

Finally, the same considerations apply to some of the most important and innovative works in the social sciences as well. All of Pareto's late, sociological work was inspired by a singular experience that happened in 1897, transforming the liberal economist into a sociologist of the illogical (Finer 1966, p. 11). Personal experiences also played a major role in the genesis of the works of Robert Michels (1989) or Norbert Elias (1991). Victor Turner developed his approach about liminality and communitas while reading van Gennep, being in a "liminal" situation himself (Edith Turner 1985).

Given these facts, one could expect that Durkheim and Weber may also have had some crucial formative experiences that defined and gave direction to their thought. However, before embarking on such a search, it is necessary specify the exact target. First of all, it was already pointed out that for contemporary social scientists, the decisive experiences were often encountered while reading. Especial attention should be therefore placed on those authors who could have exerted a particular effect on Durkheim or Weber. Second, significant experiences altering the course of (Western) thought only happened during periods of deep crisis; in the words of Arnold Toynbee, in "times of trouble"; in the language preferred by the paper, dissolutions of order. This condition is met in our case as both the first, pioneer, and the second, classical stage in the birth of sociology coincided with such periods of crisis (Nisbet 1966, p. 21).

However, the modern period and sociology, the "par excellence" modern science, do possess an additional characteristic: the ability and need to reflect explicitly on the contemporary age. In all the previous periods of crisis, the fact of crisis only provoked an intensified reflection on the human condition as such. However, since the period of Enlightenment, there has been a heightened awareness of the feeling of living in a particular, unique period of time. According to the independent but mutually reinforcing analyses by Michel Foucault and Norbert Elias, modern philosophy and sociology represented two parallel responses to the same dilemma.

Foucault argues his point in a commentary on Kant, while Elias in a discussion of Comte. The similarity of the exposition and the points is indeed striking. According to Foucault, Kant stands at the origin of the two main threads in modern philosophy: the concern with the truth value of statements, an analytic philosophy of truth; and also a concern with the particular moment in which the philosopher was writing, a "reflection on "today" as difference in history and as motive for a particular philosophical task", a critical ontology of the present (1988, p. 95; 1984, p. 38).

Mutatis mutandis , Elias says much the same things about Comte (1970). He argues that Comte should be credited with the founding of sociology not only because he coined the word (a feat not to be belittled), but also as he defined the dual tasks sociology has not ceased to pursue since. On the one hand, this was an empirical analysis of the social condition, using, in so far as possible, the methods and techniques of the natural sciences; on the other, sociology also represented a break in the history of thought because it was an explicit attempt to understand the contemporary age (modernity) as a special moment, a difference in history. Thus, one could expect some kind of increased and thematised awareness concerning their age in the case of both Durkheim and Weber.

Third, the question is not simply about influences and teachers. At stake are the <u>founding</u> experiences of sociology. It is necessary to

focus on the most significant experiences, and to substantiate the evidence with some additional proof, related especially to matters of personal or professional identity. In other words, in order to be strong enough to become the founding experience of sociology, the key formative experiences of Durkheim and Weber must be related to the basic problems of the age in which they were living, while at the same time touching the heart of their personal and professional identities.

The fact that major breakthroughs in thought are related to certain founding experiences has been demonstrated by the evidence listed above. A theoretical underpinning relies upon the works of Voegelin (1978), Foucault (1984) and Turner (1985), but takes as its starting point the writings of Weber. The way in which non conscious processes influence thought and action has been much in the center of Weber's work. However, as opposed to Freud, and similarly to Schutz (1962), Bateson (1972) or Goffman (1974), he did not search for such factors outside thought, in instincts, impulses, or drives, but in certain hidden and taken for granted mental habits. This is the underlying idea behind his famous switchmen metaphor (Weber 1948a, p. 280). Under normal conditions, much of the mental framework of our action is unproblematic, taken for granted, routine. It provides a fixed track, the limits inside which actual behaviour and competition between individuals is governed by objective phenomena like interests. However, in certain moments, the framework breaks down, everything becomes up in the air, to be rethought and redefined. In such periods, the previous guideines for action like stable interests and values no longer provide a stable reference point. They will only operate once the new framework has been found and settled.

The previous account describes the process in a nutshell, but does not specify how the change could effectively takes place. Weber's work provided guidelines for each of these points. (5) First, the passing away of the taken for granted framework is not to be taken lightly. It is not simply a matter of "progrèss", but is lived an experienced as a wholesale dissolution of order. A precondition

for the understanding of the actual path of history therefore requires a sensitivity to this process on the part of the researcher, implying a similar experiential basis. (6) Second, though the process of decomposition implies a major socio-political upheaval, its analysis also requires a difficult work upon one's own preconceptions. If Hegel's famous dictum about the owl of Minerva has a deep meaning, this is the realisation that scholars often keep using the same categories of thought that no longer apply to the changed conditions. The struggle against the way certain categories of obsolete thought exert an influence has been at the forefront of the most important innovators of the 20th century like Weber, Keynes and Foucault - and it is not accidental that they mostly ended up being misunderstood and classified into the very framework they wanted to escape. (7)

Third, however, the work of reflexive thought still cannot provide answers, a way out. Just as the first step, the collapse of the old framework had an experiential basis, so it must be with the establishment of the new. Weber discusses the mental part of this operation under the concept of "stamping". (8) This concept, central for the understanding of Weber, has so far hardly received any attention, though it was prominently present in a crucial segment of his work, the 'Introduction' published in 1915 to the series of writings entitled "The Economic Ethics of World Religions", the first publication based on his substantive research accomplished after 1910 in which he reflected upon the basic stakes of that endeavour (Tenbruck 1980).

Immediately after the introductory sentences, on the second page of the paper, he defines his aim as an "attempt to peel off the directive elements in the life-conduct of those social *strata* which have most strongly influenced the practical ethic of their respective religions" (Weber 1948a, p. 268), and immediately adds a methodological comment: "[t]hese elements have stamped the most characteristic fetures upon practical ethics". Later, still in the introductory part of this Introduction, he emphasises that, despite the importance of social, economic, and political influences, "a religious ethic ... receives its stamp primarily from religious

sources, and, first of all, from the content of its annunciation and its promise" (p. 270). Even though a change in the socially decisive strata for a particular religion has a key importance, "the type of religion, once stamped, has usually exerted a rather far-reaching influence upon the life-conduct of very heterogenous strata." Finally, at the end of the first part of the paper which is an extended and subtle critique of Nietzsche's *Genealogy of Morals* , Weber qualifies his undertaking by stating that he makes no attempt at a systematic study of the way various psychic-religious states gave psychological stamp to different religions, will only gives a few indications (p. 279) and adds that:the difference between theoretical or practical rationalism of the life-conduct of the relevant strata will bear different stamps (pp. 279-80). It is directly in the next paragraph that the famous switchmen-metaphor is used.

Though Weber developed his concept of stamping for his sociology of religions, the application can be extended for the analysis of the way single individual experiences stamp non-religious systems of thought. In this way, the paper now possesses the conceptual tools to analyse the experiences underlying the foundations of modern sociology.

3. The major formative experiences of Durkheim

The biographical evidence about Emile Durkheim (15 April, 1858 - 15 November,1917) is particularly meagre. One of the reasons for this scarcity is Durkheim's extreme reluctance in disclosing biographical details. The secondary accounts are very repetitive, as they rely upon the same sources: a couple of personal recollections, especially a major article by Davy (1919) and an Introduction by Mauss (1928), and a few scattered remarks in letters and reviews is all we have.

Among the scarce sources, concerning major formative experiences, there are only two available pieces of information. In both cases, breaking his silence, Durkheim made a short account of

the same episode that he clearly considered to be decisive for his work. The story by now is well known. In a 8 November 1907 letter, written as a protest to a point of criticism raised in an article about the German origins of his work, he stated that it was in 1895 that "for the first time, I found a means of tackling sociologically the study of religion. It was a revelation to me. That lecture course marks a watershed in my thinking, so much so that all my previous research had to be started all over again so as to be harmonised with these new views", adding that the real source of that experience was "the works of Robertson Smith and his school." (Durkheim 1982, p.259-60). Six years later, in a review article of the book version of the same argument, he repeated the point (Durkheim 1975 [1913], pp. 405-7; Engl. trsl. Lukes, 237-8).

Concerning the positive content of Durkheim's disclosure, there are a series of excellent analyses available. Lukes (1973, pp. 238-44) provided a detailed commentary about what Durkheim could have meant by this statement. Pickering (1984) has demonstrated with much care the exact impact the experience had on Durkheim's views on religion. Jones has published a series of articles (1981, 1986, 1991) dealing with the exact links between the views of Durkheim and Mauss on the one hand, and Robertson Smith, Frazer and other British anthropologists on the other. Finally, in two bold and ingenous articles, Edward Tyriakian came up with two different models of explananation (1979, 1981). In one, he compared and contrasted Durkheim's 1912 book with the book of revelation by John; in the other, he hypothesised that the impact of the reading of Robertson Smith was related to Durkheim's Jewish identity. (11).

The interpretation proposed here will be complementary and not competetive with the previous efforts, as it will center on a negative aspect of the disclosure. Though there is no reason to doubt the truth of the information Durkheim left us, there are some puzzling elements about it. First of all, he was already 37 years old at the time when he encountered the book of Robertson Smith. Two of his four major books have already published before, while the third was underway, showing little sign of Durkheim's

new substantive interest (Pickering 1984). The effect was restricted to his last work, focusing around the sociology of religion. It did not alter his basic sociological outlook in a fundamental manner.

Of this, there is a telling fact. Durkheim first published the *Rules* in 1894-5. At that time, he emphasised that its results were provisional, in need of further revisions. The second edition appeared in 1902. The reading experience that has happened to Durkheim just after the completion of the first edition would have provided ample opportunity for making corrections, if they were deemed necessary. However, apart from a new Preface that mostly dealt with critics, the new edition has remained unaltered (Lukes 1982, p. 7).

The question is whether it would be possible to find traces of other, earlier formative experience(s) for Durkheim, and whether this could be connected in some way to this major disclosure. For this, we have to return to the biographical details. However, before doing so, it may be worthwhile returning to a bit more thorough analysis of Durkheim's description of his encounter of Robertson Smith and the circumstances under which this piece of evidence came to light, all the more so as there are additional puzzles surrounding it.

Durkheim's characterisation of Robertson Smith is hardly more than a few lines. Yet, it contains two imprecisions that, given the context, are bound to be meaningful. First, he talks about Robertson Smith and "his school". The problem is that such a school simply did not exist. Robertson Smith was a crucial link in the chain of thought between Scottish Enlightenment and the present, but he did not create a "school". His most important student and protégé was the famous anthropologist James Frazer. Frazer had a high esteem of Smith, wrote a respectful obituary, but has soon abandoned most of the ideas specific to Robertson Smith, and all but returned to the tradition of Tylor. The only school proper on whom Robertson Smith had a significant impact were the Cambridge ritualists (Calder 1991). They, however, were

only formed after 1907, and Durkheim was already a main influence on them.

Second, Durkheim claims that "the science of religions is essentially English and American: not at all German" (Lukes 1973, p. 238). This, however, is plainly false. The school of Biblical criticism to which Robertson Smith belonged was established by Wellhausen and was part of a long German tradition that, through Ritschl, Ewald and Baur, went back to Schleiermacher, ultimately to Luther. Even to consider Robertson Smith as a par excellence British thinker is highly misleading. As the recent monograph on Robertson Smith has put it, his main significance lies in the fact that he introduced and popularised certain continental, especially German and Dutch ideas in Britain (Beidelman 1974).

In the single piece of information disclosing the major formative experience of his life-work, contrasting the allegations of the German roots of his thinking, Durkheim invents an English and American school around a Scottish thinker whose main achievement was the transmission of German ideas and methods to the island. The whole account therefore clearly cannot be accepted at face value. It is necessary to search for the formative influences of Durkheim, possibly related to Germany and his own identity.

Due to the scarcity of available information and based on the indications provided by Durkheim himself, commentators usually skip over the bare biographical facts in a few pages and then elaborate in some more detail on the formative intellectual influences of Durkheim. The evidence is equivocal, the same names being repeated and for the same reasons. It is well known that the major classics of sociology, especially Comte, but also Saint-Simon exerted an influence of his thought, and that later he came under the spell of Spencer and Espinas. He has also read Kant and used for the purpose, as a "handbook" the works of Renouvier. Among his teachers, only two, Fustel de Coulanges and Boutroux had a strong effect on him.

There is only one contentious name, Ernest Renan. Lukes, following Durkheim, only mentions Renan in order to dismiss any possible links between the two (1973, pp. 67-8). However, Peyre suggests that "[i]n spite of his frank distaste for Renan's writings, Durkheim was influenced by them more than any historian of ideas has yet shown" (Peyre 1960, p.28). It is true that there is a definite evidence that Durkheim was particularly irritated by Renan's style. In this sense, Renan's thinking is much closer to Bergson's than to Durkheim's, and the distance and mutual dislike of Bergson (who was Tarde's successor at the *Collège de France*) and Durkheim are well-known (Lukes 1973, p. 52). Still, once attention is shifted from Renan's style to the content of his thought - and content mattered always more to Durkheim - , the more closely one looks at it, the more Renan gains significance for some of the central interests of Durkheim. In practically all the main aspects of Renan's activity, the closeness to Durkheim's main aims and interests are striking. First, Renan was one of the most influential propagators of science - even called the "priest of science" (Lukes 1973, p. 67). Second, his interest in science was increased, indeed raised almost to the level of a missionary zeal, by the French defeat in the 1870-71 war. He has become convinced that the German victory was a sign of a superiority, rooted in educational and scientific achievements. (12) However, his praise for Germany was not unreserved. Though acknowledging his unreserved admiration for German culture until the war, he became disillusioned by the excessive patriotism the country manifested during the war, and especially by the behavior of its soldiers who were not different from the "mercenaries of all times, vicious, drunkards, thieves, demoralised, plundering like in the times of Waldstein", and predicting that the violence committed in Elsace will be the guarantee of endless wars to come (1871, pp. v-vi). Third, Renan was deeply interested in Jewish history and identity. His inaugural address at the *Collège de France* delivered on 21 February 1862 was entitled "On the part of Semitic people in the history of civilisation". Due to Catholic opposition to this talk, he was demoted from his chair in 1864 and only reinstalled in 1870. On 27 January 1883, the year he was

nominated administrator of the *Collège de France* , he delivered a talk entitled "Judaism as race and as religion".

It is more than a reasonable guess that such questions must have appealed to Durkheim, a devotee of scholarship and the French republican ideals, and the heir of several generation of rabbis. But there are further pieces of evidence that make the connection even stricter. First, the 1870-71 war, the decisive experience for Renan's (and also Durkheim's) scientific interests was also the moment when Durkheim has first encountered signs of antsemitism. (13) Second, Renan's 1883 talk has been given in front of an association called 'The Saint-Simon circle'. I have not yet found evidence whether Durkheim was a member of this group or attended the talk. However, given the fact that it was exactly in 1882-83 that he was "converted" to Saint-Simonism (Mauss 1928), it would be difficult to argue that he did not know about the event or was not interested, even intrigued. Finally, it was on 11 March 1882, shortly before Durkheim's *agrégation* , that Renan delivered his best known talk 'What Is a Nation' that, according to Peyre (1960, p. 29), he probably attended. In sum, in spite of the differences in style, there is a striking convergence between the main interests of Renan and Durkheim - the questions of science, the nation, and Jewish identity, in the context of the shattering events and experiences of 1870-71.

Finally, there is a telling, and only relatively recently accessible evidence about the importance Renan had for Durkheim. It is related to the crucial formative years for Durkheim's project. On 6 August 1883, at the end his first years at the liceum, and very shortly after the two major talks of Renan, Durkheim delivered a speech to celebrate the price winners of his school. This is the first public document we have about Durkheims views, published posthumously only in 1967. It preceded by two years his first written publication. In the speech, he makes reference only to one contemporary thinker, already on the first page of the transcript, and this is Ernest Renan. (14)

In order to discover the significance of Durkheim's encounter with Renan and of the German connection, it is necessary to leave the tracing of influences and return to biographical details, following the chronological order.

Concerning family background and childhood experiences, only a few facts are worth mentioning. Durkheim was born on 15 April 1858. On his father's side, his ancestors were rabbis, back to the 18th century. He was brought up in a tightly knit family, under austere conditions. In his whole educational career, he was an extremely serious and devoted student. In the local school, under the influence of a Catholic school-mistress, he went through a short period of mysticism, but quickly overcame this and has become distanced from religion after. The most significant event of his whole childhood was no doubt the 1870-71 war.

The Franco-Prussian war of 1870-71 and the ensuing Commune was a fundamental experience to all those major thinkers who lived through it, whether they were mature by that time (Marx, Taine, Renan), young adults (Nietzsche, Le Bon, Sorel, Kropotkin) or - even especially - if they were children (Weber, Durkheim). However, in Durkheim's case, there was an additional factor. During the German occupation of his home town, he witnessed, and may even have been subject to, anti-semitism (Lukes 1973, p. 41).

Political events and personal motives and experiences remained interconnected for the whole generation. After 1871, France became overwhelmed by the defeat and was searching for the reasons of the German superiority. Many older and younger members of the leading elite went to Germany in order to discover the reasons. Durkheim, even here, fitted therefore into a trend when, in 1885-86, he spent the second part of his "sabbathical" year in Germany, visiting Berlin, Marburg and Leipzig (Lukes 1973, p. 85). Though the purpose of the trip may have been strictly practical, given Durkheim's range of interest and capabilities and his age, it is not too risky to conjecture that the trip must have been a major formative experience for

Durkheim. In order to assess this claim, it is necessary to reconstruct the exact conditions of the trip. Apart from the external conditions, the visit also came about in a very special time in the dynamics of Durkheim's own development.

Apart from the question of nation, the second problem for which Durkheim wanted to use science was the other main issue of the day, the "social question" (Procacci 1978, 1993) According to Mauss, it was this question that, even during his school years, preoccupied Durkheim most. The topic he first formulated for his thesis was the link between individualism and socialism and, as Mauss pointed out, he has never lost from sight his original starting point (Mauss 1928).

However, already by 1883, the question was reformulated. It was posed now as the link between the individual and society. Due to his more recent readings, the works of Espinas and especially Spencer, his theoretical interests gained an upper hand, and he came under the impact of organicism. Though the assertion of Alpert (1939, p. 33) according to which it took him a decade to liberate himself from under the impact of a biological orientation may be an exaggeration, it contained more than an element of truth. It was under this impact that he came to formulate, in 1884, his first plan for *Division of Labor*.

This formulation of the thesis question, however, not only distanced him from his more practical interests, but was also an extremely general, impossible scholastic project. At that level of generality, the problem of the "link between the individual and society" is a scholastic abstraction, a non-problem. It simply cannot be treated with any hope of completion.

The project, indeed, proved to be unmanageable. At least, according to all evidence, point to the fact that before 1886, Durkheim has not made any progress on his thesis. All he managed to complete in three years were three book reviews published in 1885. They show that in 1884-85, the most significant experience Durkheim had was the reading of Schäffle's

1884 book *Bau und Leben des soziales Körpers* . One of the reviews discussed the book, while the other two repeatedly mentioned both Schäffle in general and the book in particular, Spencer and Espinas only receiving a few short allusions. Such a lack of achievement was certainly not satisfying for a person with his ability and ambitions. For the academic year 1885-86, he applied for and obtained a leave of absence. After a few months, on the basis of a conversation with Liard with whom he shared a deep commitment concerning the need to renovate the French educational system, with an emphasis on "realism" (LaCapra 1985, p. 310; Wallwork 1972, p. 12), at the age of 28, he decided to go to Germany for the remaining period.

A simple account of the facts immediately renders visible the impact of the short visit. Right upon his return, Durkheim started serious work. Before the end of the year, he finished the first draft of *Division of Labor* . He also produced a series of articles, mostly based on his German experiences. In these, he began to sketch the outlines of what eventually became his approach to sociology. According to Mauss, Durkheim was already clear in his mind in 1886 that there was need for the establishment of a new science, sociology. (14) The surge in his creativity did not pass unnoticed. By 1887, Durkheim is no longer just a "very serious" and "rigorous", though less "penetrating" and somewhat "abstract" young high school professor (Lukes 1973, pp. 64-5). He reveals his abilities and is nominated for a university post in Bordeaux.

For Durkheim, 1886 clearly represented a break, an acceleration. Yet, both Mauss and Lukes loyally take at face value his late claims downplaying the German impact. Thus, according to Mauss, Durkheim came to the new conclusions in 1886 "by a progressive analysis of his thought and the facts" (1928), while Lukes asserts that the influences he encountered during the visit "only clarified and reinforced existing tendencies in his thought" (1973, p. 92). It is important to clarify the matter before going into the short analysis of the German visit.

This point adds to the argument already made in the introductory section about the manner in which the serious study of singular experiences has been rendered impossible by certain prior assumptions concerning their nature and impact. This time, it is the assertion that such an experience must be an all-for-nothing, global change, after which nothing would remain of whatever existed before. Of course, such experiences rarely if ever happen. No matter which thinker is taken as an example, it will always be possible to show that the new idea existed in a "rudimentary" form even before. However, such an approach would never be able to account for the fact why it is only certain thinkers who accomplish major breakthroughs in thought. There were countless young scholars in the late 19th century who read Spencer and Comte, or who were thinking about the relation between the individual and society. None of them did what Durkheim has accomplished. If we do not subscribe to the doctrine of predestination - in which case the analysis would be truly superfluous -, it is necessary to highlight the exact moment which, suddenly crystallising the previous lose trends, made Durkheim, the potential young scholar into the Durkheim we know. The facts show that this did not simply happen "gradually", that there was a crucial moment of concentration around 1886; and that this coincided with his trip to Germany. The trip, therefore, was not merely a useful visit to help Durkheim's scientific formation, but was a real experience, providing a sudden push. It did not simply add to his existing stock of knowledge, but changed the way he saw things and the world, altered his frame of mind - produced a different person, more focused, and armed with a singular determination. In Weberian terminology, the visit stamped him, set him on a track that has only been altered somewhat in 1895. (16)

After establishing the fact of a major experience, it is necessary to present the exact substance of this experience. Here, the main problem is again the shortage of sources. Apart from the texts published by Durkheim and a few additional bits and pieces, even the basic facts of his trip are at the moment beyond reach. One must be contented with the texts.

Durkheim published two major texts about his visit in Germany. One is a detailed study of the German university system (1975, vol.3, pp. 437-86). Though it is very much a scholarly work, containing a lot of information and critical evaluation, the overall tone is decisively enthusiastic. There are many things Durkheim found remarkable about the German university system - the still existing corporate spirit, the seriousness of the students (p.466), the devotion to the nitty-gritty of work as opposed to the oratorial allures characteristic of France, etc. Though it would be erroneous only to contrast the attitudes of Durkheim and Weber, one cannot help noticing that Durkheim found many of exactly those aspects of the German University system worthy of copying which Weber, following Nietzsche, found most nauseating, like its "spirit of gravity" and its combination of authoritarian and corporatist elements. Weber, on the basis of his travel experience in the United States, wanted to correct exactly those elements of the German system Durkheim deemed worthwhile copying (Weber 1973, pp. 23-31), while in other cases, he was critical about the academic life of his own country in exactly the same manner as Durkheim was of his own (like being opposed to the abusive political rhetorics of some professors, and the willingness to build intellectual systems as opposed to doing the daily business of research).

The second text, a detailed study of main currents in German thought, is the more significant piece, and calls for a more detailed account (1975, vol.1, pp. 267-343). The introductory first page of the text already defines Durkheim's main purpose in the article, alluding to the substance of his German experience. This is the realisation that the science of morals is not only a theoretical possibility, but in fact it has already been established. He assigns this breakthrough to the work of Wilhelm Wundt that has just been published in 1886. The same introductory page also unequivocally gives the background against which this breakthrough represented a difference, both in Germany and France: the spiritualists and Kantians on the on hand, and the utilitarians, the followers of Spencer, on the other. In the French

context, these two traditions can safely be assigned to the names of Renouvier and Espinas - exactly those earlier major influences on Durkheim that have been both overcome and preserved, in the sense of *aufheben* , by the German experience.

The article proper consists of three major parts and a conclusion. The first part is about a theme that will become central again for Parsons: the relation between economics and sociology. First, Durkheim discusses those writers among whom the movement for the science of ethics has started: the German political economists, especially the so-called "socialists of the chair". He starts with an implicit self-critique, stating that although in France many talked about the group, few have actual read them - a possible allusion to the comment he had made about the school in a 1885 review (Durkheim 1970, p. 183). The article then introduces what "radically distinguishes" (1975, vol.1, p.269) the German from the English schools in economics. Much of the page that follows (pp.269-70) is taken up by two long quotes from Schönberg's *Handbook of Political Economy* . After indicating that there is some problem concerning the precision of these formulas, Durkheim moves on to a detailed discussion of the ideas of Schmoller and Wagner (pp. 271-82). His conclusion is that though they, as opposed to the English economists, are on the proper road, they fail to draw the right conclusions of their own ideas, and rather place excessive confidence in legislative action.

One may add here that the affinities between Durkheim and the socialists of the chair, especially Schmoller, indeed proved to be close in several areas. First, the latter school serves as an important channel of transmission between the early-modern police, an all-purposeful though not all-powerful apparatus of the absolutist state, and the Bolshevik party apparatus. The link between the Polizeiwissenschaft, the "science of police" and the German historical school is an established fact (Tribe 1988, 1995). The impact of the German school on Bolshevik economic thought has also been pointed out by Tribe (1988, p. 4). The closeness between the activity and tasks of the absolutist police and the communist party apparatus has been the object of an empirical

study (Horváth and Szakolczai, 1992, esp. Ch.8). Finally, the Durkheimian idea of reconstructing "social solidarity" on the basis of the occupational groups, the guiding thread of *Division of Labor* , reveals a striking affinity with the way the communist parties were organised. These were precisely built upon workplace cells, and were able to exert such an undisputed power on this basis, while all other modern political parties have a territorial organisation. The effective power base of Communism collapsed like a mountain of cards, rendering the changes irreversible, the moment political parties were forbidden to organise themselves at the workshop level. Moreover, this affinity between Durkheimian thought and the effective power basis of Bolshevism has been recognised by Marcel Mauss, Durkheim's own appointed heir, in a 1925 analysis of Bolshevism that still reads as strikingly original and incisive, and has recently been translated into English in (Gane, 1992). It is rather perplexing, therefore, that it had been left out of the otherwise excellent French edition, with the allegation that it was a purely journalistic piece of circumstance, not worthwhile reprinting in a scientific collection.

The second indirect affinity between Durkheim and Schmoller concerned their academic politics. Both of them spent much effort in establishing connections within state and university bureaucracies and building up a whole network of disciples and personal connections in order to further their own, missionary ambitions, and also to get rid of opponents. Durkheim's positive methods are discussed in Clark (1973), the story of the promotion of Durkheim's protégé, Bouglé being a particularly pertinent example (pp. 69-71 and 177-8), while on the negative side one can mention the erasing of Tarde and van Gennep from academic life (Needham 1967, p. xi). Schmoller has similarly become the first "university pope" since Hegel's time by getting his students into influential position through his personal contacts in the Prussian ministry of education (Honigsheim 1968, pp. 5-6). This has been a constant source of conflict between Weber and Schmoller (Marianne Weber 1988, pp. 414-8; Baumgarten 1964, p. 703).

Returning to the text, the consequences the historical school failed to draw, however, have been taken, however, by Schäffle (p. 282). Schäffle made a distinction between morals and law, emphasised the empirical bases of both, and was clear about the dangers of legislative influence. The problem with him, according to Durkheim, is that he assigns "reflection an excessive role in the formation of human societies and in the genesis of moral ideas" (p. 284). In this way, concludes Durkheim on a critical note, Schäffle considers society as a product of art and the family as the sole natural institution. In concluding the first section, Durkheim asserts that the process of the disintegration of philosophy is already on its way. One part of the process has been accomplished by the progressive independence of psychology, with the help of the biological sciences. The other part will be the independence struggle of morals from philosophy, where it will, analogically, rely upon the help of the social sciences (pp. 285-6).

Economics, however, is only one of the social sciences that should contribute to the establishment of the science of morals. The other helping hand should be given by law. Therefore, the second part of the essay discusses German legal theories, focusing, after a briek mention of Jellinek, almost exclusively on the recent work of Ihering. Though Durkheim judges his underlying psychology extremely simplistic, as it attributes an excessive role to calculation and interests, Ihering "has the merit of sensing and clearly indicating the manner in which morals can become a positive science" (p. 297).

The third and most important part of the essay (in the original, the second of the three articles) is devoted to the founder of the science of morals, Wundt. His work presents itself as the "synthesis of all these isolated views, these specialised studies" that Durkheim discussed so far (p. 298). Wundt starts by the claim that the science of morals can't be reduced only to psychological observation. There is also need for a social psychology (*Völkerpsychologie*), a "history of languages, religious, habits (*moeurs*), of the civilisation in general". In sum, there is need for a "genesis of morals" (p. 299).

According to Durkheim, Wundt proceeds by analysing the different elements of such a genesis, and resumes the discussion by pointing out the two common elements of all moral conceptions, and the two general laws of moral evolution. These are the "law of three stages", and the "law of the heterogeneity of ends" (p. 312). After a discussion of the formation of morals, the discussion shifts the fundamental principles on which it rests. These are given by two centers of gravity: individualism and universalism (p. 314). Concerning the moral ends, Wundt argues for the impossibility of individualism: "[i]f the individual does not play a primary role in morals, this is because it is too small a thing: what difference can his sufferings or joys make to the world?" (p. 318). As opposed to this, societies are the true subjects of morals. They have a distant past and future. Even among social groups, their interest is not equal, and varies with their volume. This line of argument is closed by a peculiar statement, a "thought to which we could not accommodate ourselves in any case: this is that after thousands and thousands of years, the whole mankind may disappear, without leaving a trace in the world" (p. 319). This, of course, is the idea of the eternal recurrence.

The discussion then moves into the question of moral means, and presents an elaborate taxonomy of social and individual norms, having at their center the "moral ideal". The basic idea of Wundt is that morality is a social function (p. 329). At this point, Durkheim finds this idea as well excessive, and argues that individual motivations also have some importance. The section concludes by a call for more determination in the realisation of our moral ideals: "if we see it now less clearly, ... the mistake is ours, does not reside in the nature of things" (p. 331).

The third essay is much shorter, and contains Durkheim's concluding remarks. It focuses on the common elements in the works of the authors discussed, contrasting them with Mill, Spencer, and Kant. Durkheim claims that such a comparison is necessary to "render visible the novelty of the German school" (p. 335), in its emphasis on the inductive as opposed to the deductive

method. The ethics of both Kant and the utilitarianis is defective. "Only the German moralists see in the moral phenomena facts that are at the same time empirical and *sui generis* . Morals is not an applied or derived science, but is autonomous" (ibid.). Moreover, at the end of this crucial summary paragraph, he judges it expedient to distinguish moral facts from social facts. The two should not be confused: "[m]orals is not a consequence and like a corollary of sociology, but a social science apart from and among the others" (ibid.). (16B) At the end, he states as a major critical point against the German school that it has devoted so far too much attention to general principles and much less to empirical details, and shortly discusses the work of Albert-Hermann Post who was the only moralist in Germany to study details for its own sake (p.339).

It is now possible to present and assess the exact content of Durkheim's German experience. Under the impact of his new encounters, Durkheim was able to fit all of his major ideas together into a coherent project, driven by a single goal, the establishment of a science of morals. Such a novel discipline, under the guidance of the basic principle of social solidarity, would eliminate both the "social problem" at its roots, and the ever widening gap between the individual and the state, forming the nation into a single, organic body, thus integrating Durkheim's theoretical, moral, and practical aspirations and ambitions.

If this be the case, one must give an account of the resistance of Durkheim 1907 and 1913 against the significance of a German influence on his work. There are at least three reasons that could explain this fact, two being known and trivial, the third - and arguably the most important - not analysed so far. First, the debate with Deploige occured in the last years before WWI, and after the Dreyfus affair. Durkheim, who was a French patriot of Jewish descent, had all the reasons not wanting to stress this German connection at that time. (17) Second, the originality of one's ideas is always a sensitive issue in academic life. However, the years around 1900 was an period in which this issue was

particularly pertinent. Thus, in the last decade of the 19th century, there is was long a protracted debate between Sighele, Le Bon and Tarde concerning priority in the discovery of the basic principles of crowd psychology, while in the first years of the 20th century there was a similarly intense rivalry between Mosca and Pareto concerning elite theory. Both debates were not about marginal issues and persons, but the most influential ideas of the age and lay at the center of academic and even public attention. It is therefore no wonder that Durkheim was particularly sensitive to the matter.

But there is a third reason, also connected to the question of originality and the German connection, but involving something more. In his early work Durkheim has asserted that the groundworks of this project about the science of morals, on the analogy of the establishment of psychology, have already been laid down by Wundt. There can be no confusion between this new science and sociology, as sociology was only discussed as one of the auxiliary sciences helping the establishment of a science of morals. However, this creates considerable perplexity, as it is exactly Wundt who is in general credited with the establishment of the autonomous science of psychology (Manicas 1987), and Durkheim specifically refers to the episode about the establishment of the laboratory (Durkheim 1975, vol.3, p. 474) that is considered as one of his major achievements in psychology. Furthermore, throughout his career, Durkheim considered the strict separation of sociology and psychology as one of the cornerstones of his system. This was one of the central issues in his debate with Tarde.

The fundamental reason due to which Durkheim wanted to hide, evidently even from himself, the German origins of his ideas was given by the ambivalent relationship he had toward Wundt. On the one hand, in 1886-87, Durkheim just <u>followed</u> Wundt as a disciple in the autonomous science of morals. On the other hand, a few years later, he <u>imitated</u> Wundt in the establishment of the autonomous science of sociology. This, in itself, would create some tension, but it is not all. This displacement, on the one hand, is a

fact, as he definitely changes his attitudes with respect to sociology shortly after 1887. On the other hand, even in the 1887 essay, Durkheim omitted any reference to the fact that Wundt has been associated with the establishment of psychology. He could only present his story, the analogy between the establishment of psychology and the science of morals, by omitting the fact that the founder of both disciplines is one and the same person.

The half-year long stay in Germany proved to be a fundamental experience for Durkheim. The writing and the eventual impact of *Division of Labor* bears testimony to this fact. However, if six months are enough to encounter face-to-face a different cultural environment, they are not enough to understand it in depth, to recognise the all-important nuances. One becomes attentive to the most striking phenomena, the basic differences, and not to different levels of analysis and understanding. It is unlikely that such an impact would question one's own taken for granted ideas, even less to go beyond the surface of the newly received wisdom. The impact helps to give a better focus to what one has already known, but does not produce new question marks.

This is exactly what has happened to Durkheim. He has picked up in Germany those pieces of work that have most fitted with his own previous preconceptions, and even later failed to get interested in the most innovative works of contemporary German thought. After a short relation, he broke with Simmel, his exact contemporary, and the thought of Weber who was six years his junior has completely escaped him.

Durkheim's relation to German thought in the late 19th century is very similar to the contemporary Anglo-American attitude to French thought. Fitting everyone into the rubric of post-structuralism or post-modernism, it is overlooked that the work of Michel Foucault does not inhabit the same universe as that of Baudrillard, Lyotard, Derrida, even Deleuze. Though having much in common in terms of background, even basic orientation, the project of Foucault was to continuously overcome the limitations

given by the general "mood" of the times, while the rest of the post-moderns kept expressing, repeating, elaborating it. Exactly because they were always trying always to be original, they never escaped the limits of their age, while the project of Foucault, like that of Weber or of Keynes, another victim of a huge misunderstanding, obtained a touch of lasting contemporaneity.

We are now in position to return to the event disclosed by Durkheim, the "revelation" of 1895. Only two points can be shortly discussed, concerning what this event did and what it did not alter in Durkheim's thought.

First, Durkheim was correct in placing the emphasis on his second major experience, the reading of Robertson Smith, even if not so in denying the first, his travel in Germany. The first was a rather superficial encounter that has enabled him to combine his major concerns in an approach that merely expressed the spirit of the times. This is visible in the two books he produced under the encounter. The *Division of Labor* and the *Rules* , published in 1893 and 1894-5, belong to the late 19th century. They are tedious to read, advance little beyond Spencer. If one would read them todaywithout knowing that they were written by the "great founding father", nobody would pay them any attention.

Things are a bit different with *Suicide* , the first book published after the second experience, in 1897. The book, of course, was not the product of this experience. Durkheim has already given a course on suicide in 1889-90, five years before. The difference, therefore, is partly due to the subject matter. It was an empirical book, as opposed to the evolutionist philosophy of history that *Division of Labor* to a large extent still was. But the final version was put together after the experience, and it makes a difference in the intellectual weight of the book.

The real effect was Durkheim's last work, the *Elementary Forms* , on which he worked for over a decade. According to Jones (1981) and Pickering (1984), the change of orientation is fundamental. From an interest in the empirical and evolutionist analysis of

contemporary social change, Durkheim moves to the study of religion in other, "primitive" cultures, developing a series of concepts like ritual and collective effervescence, of which not only there is no trace in the early writings, but that even counterdict their framework.

The late work, as contemporary critics were ready to point out, had serious limits. Still, it carried a potential for understanding extending way beyond the early work. The realisation of that potential, however — and this is the second point — was severely jeopardised by the fact that Durkheim was unable or unwilling to reflect and elaborate upon that difference. He refused to rethink and alter his own taken for granted, the framework of his thought; to "work on himself". This is best seen in the way he republished his methodological work without any alteration. As the new insights were fitted into the old framework, the difference they could have made was largely lost.

In this way, even in his last works, Durkheim was not able to make any use of Weber. The sociological methodology of Durkheim and Weber had practically no common points. In order to enable one to perceive any similarity, Weber first of all had to be normalised, forced back into the background commonplaces from which he tried to escape. Though this work is usually credited to Talcott Parsons, it has been largely prepared and completed before by some of the most effective and least noticed "detractors" of Weber, Alfred and Marianne Weber.

4. The major formative experiences of Weber

The trace on which the search for the basic formative experiences of Max Weber (21 April, 1864 - 14 June, 1920) can start is even thinner. Weber, just like Durkheim, was extremely reluctant to talk about himself. The excessive use of public confessions was one of the first and most severe charges he brought up against Roscher in his first methodological writing written after his recovery from illness (Weber 1975, pp. 210-1). In fact, again just

like for Durkheim, the only piece of such a direct evidence was provoked by a debate. In February 1920, Weber has first discussed the ideas of Spengler in his seminar, and then, on the suggestion of his students, a debate with Spengler was organised in the Munich city hall. After the debate, when going home, Weber told the members of his company that "the honesty of a present-day scholar ... can be measured by his attitude to Nietzsche and Marx. Whoever does not admit that considerable parts of his own work could not have been carried out in the absence of the work of these two, only fools himself and others. The world in which we spiritually and intellectually live today is a world substantially shaped by Marx and Nietzsche." (18).

This piece of evidence has only come to light in 1964. Since then, the validity of its truth claim has often been contested. This is not surprising, as such a claim must have sounded almost unintelligible in 1964. At that time, Weber's sociology was considered to be the direct opposite of Marx's, while Nietzsche did not even enter the universe of Weber scholars. (19) A statement that put these two names at the center of Weber's positive concerns simply could not have been true. However, apart from the content of the statement that will be discussed soon in detail, certain elements related to the conditions of its uttering and publication lend extra weight to its validity.

First, the exact date of the original disclosure requires some attention. Weber did not like to talk and think about himself. Throughout his career, there were two types of events that forced him to do so. The first happened when, in the context of a public debate or a revision for a written publication, he had to reread his earlier writings. Examples are the "anticritical" debates with Fischer and Rachfahl, whose importance has been recently discovered by Wilhelm Hennis (1988), or the rereading of his essays on the 'Economic Ethic of World Religions' during the war. Such reflections did not remain idle discussions, but were transformed into effective meditative exercises, immediately followed by significant developments in Weber's thought. (20) The second type of occasions were major personal or family

events: engagement, marriage or the death of a relative, a friend or a close colleague.

In the case of the famous disclosure about Marx and Nietzsche, both conditions were present, and in perfect detail. Weber was coming out of a second public debate, (21) and this took place shortly after the 13 February death of Otto Gross, a person who crossed Weber's life in several crucial moments, and who not only thought, but lived according to what he - probably rather wrongly - held as the basic principles of Marx and Weber, being a Freudian-Nietzschean anarchist, a partisan of the "counterculture" movement in Ascona, and a supporter and participant of the short-lived Communist uprisings of 1919 in Germany (Green, 1986).

Second, the person who published the disclosure and the date of this publication also matters in this respect. The story was rendered public by Eduard Baumgarten, a German sociologist who was a relative of Max Weber, and in a book published as part of the celebration of the 100th anniversary of Weber's birthday. Baumgarten was not a person driven by sensationalism. He had in his possession about 300 letters written to or by Max Weber, providing information about intimate details of Weber's life. Yet, even though he was concerned with the publication of these letters, they are still not published. Far from advertising the disclosure, the statement is rather stuck away in the book as part of a long footnote. Moreover, the publication date of 1964 evidently mattered a lot to Baumgarten. He was so immersed in his attempt to finish the book in time that he was unable to prepare a paper for the memorial Weber conference (Stammer 1971, pp.122-3). This haste left a visible mark on the book which is extremely poorly organised. (22)

Taken all these together, it seems very likely that Weber was in the position of making a similar statement, and highly unlikely that Baumgarten would simply invent a story. It must be accepted at face value, and it is necessary to search for the manner in

which the impact (experience) of reading Marx and Nietzsche could be located in Weber's life.

The reconstruction of the experiential basis of Weber's thought is more complex than Durkheim's, as the available evidence is even scarcer. The starting point was identical, the events of 1870-71. The difference in their age at that time was not significant. Both witnessed the events during their childhood, though Durkheim was close to adolescence. There was, of course, an evident difference: Weber was on the side of the victors, while Durkheim of the defeated. But the most important difference was not due to the simple fact, rather to the different attitudes they developed on its basis. Durkheim remained safely anchored in the dominant feeling of his country: the victory of Germany must have had a secret, and the task is to find out the reasons, to imitate the victors. Weber, however, to a large extent under the influence of his uncle, Hermann Baumgarten, felt differently. Baumgarten was a well-known historian of the Protestant reformation and the ethical model for Max Weber, much more important for his development than his father. He had personally fought for the unification of Germany, but the eventual result, especially after 1871, filled him with dismay. In a manner strikingly similar to Nietzsche's views, he was deeply opposed to the predominant Prussian mentality, its militarism. He deplored the way Bismarck neglected constitutionalism and came to the conviction that this victory spelled disaster for his country, leading it to complacency, a spiritless, authoritarian system, devoid of initiative and criticism (Scaff 1984b, 85).

Weber not only came to agree, increasingly, with the diagnosis of Hermann Baumgarten. He lived it, though for a long time, he was not able to express, to catch, to diagnostise what was going on. He lived under the weight of a profoundly uneasy feeling, being oppressed by it, being unable to make any commitments, decisions, take up responsibilities.

This will be the first in a series of episodes from Weber's life from which there is hardly available information. Weber is known to be

quite elusive, reluctant to talk about himself. The concrete circumstances here only reinforced his predisposition, as this was a particularly unhappy and intolerable period of his life, and at that time a basic truth was not yet lost: that there are very few worse things than complaining to others about oneself, as such a disclosure has an immediate and disastrous effect on the self. However, there was a unique occasion in which Weber allowed a glimpse to this episode. This was two letters he wrote to Emmy Baumgarten, the daughter of Hermann Baumgarten, a girl to whom he felt particularly close, after his engagement to Marianne, on 22 April 1893, and just before the wedding, on 2 September 1893 (Weber 1936, Marianne Weber 1988, pp. 166, 182-4). The circumstances made possible, even required, disclosure about his state of mind during the mid to late 1880s.

This is the first piece of very private information, related directly to personal and not professional life, that the paper feels obliged to discuss, not without some misgivings and reluctance. However, the fundamental links between life and oeuvre for Weber make such a discussion unavoidable. The mixing of personal information and ideas has already become almost a standard practice in the Weber literature, in a manner that could never have been the case with Durkheim or Parsons, though without reflecting fully on the fact, and occasionally with an evident purpose of sensationalism. However, reference to this particular incident can be justified by a series of interlocking reasons.

First, the revelation told by Weber that for long years he was unable to commit himself to marriage (with Emmy) due to his general feeling of resignation (a word that will gain quite an importance for Weber), his unability to make commitments and responsibility, is a story identical to the one on which the whole philosophy of Kierkegaard is based. It is therefore not surprising that in a crucial letter discovered by Scaff (1984b, p. 103), written to Marianne during the summer of 1894, Kierkegaard is mentioned together with Simmel and Nietzsche as being currently at the center of Weber's interest. But Weber eventually came to reflect upon the incident in a different manner than Kierkegaard.

Instead of building a philosophy on it, he eventually used it to distance his own self from the age that weighed upon his being by its "epigonism" and "sense of resignation". Instead of trying to discover the human condition or acting as the critique of the present, he wanted to pin down the specificity of the modern age. However, in order to be able to wedge such a gap, he needed some assistance. This was provided to him, after a long "times of troubles" when for years, Weber could only survive by "the automatic continuation of [his] obligatory professional work" (Marianne Weber 1988, p. 182), in the form of the fundamental reading experiences of Marx and Nietzsche. At this moment, it is again necessary to return to the chronological narrative, starting by a few facts about Weber's family background and early years.

First, just as Durkheim and Parsons (and, for that matter, many of the most important social thinkers of the period), Weber also came from a family where religion mattered a lot. There was, however, a crucial difference. Weber's parents, and the two families in general, represented two different denominations and two fundamentally divergent views about the importance of religious issues. Therefore, for him, the fundamental question could never be the relationship to his previous identity, the dilemma of loyalty, escape and return, as his very background religious identity was based on conflict.

Second, in terms of the economic situation, the family was not only considerably better off than Durkheim's but included, in several different branches, generations of entrepreneurs (Roth, 1993). Weber had the chance to participate and observe, indeed to grow into, a family that has not only manifested the "protestant ethic", but also "the 'spirit' of capitalism". Third, Weber also had one crucial, symbolic childhood experience. At the age of four, he witnessed a railroad accident that has left profound marks on him. He described this 35 years later with the following words: "What jolted me was not only the event itself, but the sight of something so exalted to a child as a locomotive lying in the ditch like a drunk - my first experience of the transitoriness of the Great and the Beautiful on this earth." (Marianne Weber 1988, p. 32).

Fourth, again similarly to Durkheim, Weber was born into and raised by books and knowledge. His insatiable intellectual curiosity even worried his parents since his childhood. However, in the modality, there was a basic difference with respect to the attitude of Durkheim, not unrelated to differences in social background. Durkheim was always a top student. For him, the search for knowledge was inseparable from a proper advancement in the scholarly curriculum. Weber, however, was often bored to death in school. His teachers often reproached him about this. However, he was more interested in following his own thirst for understanding, and preferred reading the complete edition of Goethe's works under the school desk to being simply an eminent student.

In 1882, at the age of 18, Weber entered university, enrolling at the faculty of law. However, already in his first year, his heart went elsewhere. He took up the course of Knies on economics. Though he found the lectures rather boring, the subject fascinated him, and did a thorough study of Knies's book (Hennis 1988, p. 230, fn.79). Knies was not a towering intellectual figure, but as a man of 1848 he was close to Weber politically and, by introducing Weber to Marx (ibid., p. 155), he exerted a lasting intellectual impact on him. It was this dual encounter that set the young student of law who followed so far, without full conviction, the career of his father, into an unexpected orbit, opening up to him the perspective of economics, the possibility of treating living everyday reality beyond the dryness of legal texts. Hennis discovered the perfect expression: Knies initiated Weber (1991, p. 55, fn.15).

The encounter with Knies and then with Marx increased Weber's doubts about following the example of his father that dominated his initial university career. According to Marianne, Max Weber Sr. was "a typical bourgeois, at peace with himself and with the world" (Marianne Weber 1988, 63). Nothing could be further of his eldest son who felt much closer to the attitude of Hermann Baumgarten. The influence of his uncle could became especially

strong during 1883-84, when Max Weber spent his military service in Strasbourg where the Baumgartens lived. The encounter enabled him to get rid of the last remains of an attitude of (bourgeois) complacency, heightened his awareness and sensitivity to the dilemmas of the world he saw around himself, but gave no answers and direction. The perspective of becoming an academic in law appealed to him less and less. It looked as the worse of two possible worlds: an occupation where he would not be able to address the thoughts that preoccupied him, but that would be also distant from practical life. Yet, he was not able to commit himself to a practical position, as that would not have given him the opportunity of tackling head on the problems that preoccupied him. Due to these dilemmas, it took Weber seven years to finish his dissertation - a fact he much felt ashamed about (Marianne Weber 1988, pp. 158, 163; Weber 1936, pp. 165, 270, 273).

Still, he kept working, and finally completed his dissertation in 1889. This immediately exerted a significant effect. The ability to complete a major piece of work increased his self-confidence and also the determination to pursue a work that is at once academically acceptable and practically relevant. (23) It led him to the first of a series of major reorganisations where he suddenly and simultaneously engaged in a new track concerning both professional and private life. After finishing his dissertation, he immediately started his habilitation. This he indeed finished within two years, and it was received with especial acclaim. At the same time, he also committed himself to public associations, balanced academic and public-political activities.

The first was the *Verein für Sozialpolitik* (Boese 1939, Demm 1987), the second was the Evangelic-Social Congress (Aldenhoff 1987). In both cases, the basic impulse of Weber, at that time, was an interest in the social problem, an agenda shaped by his reading of Marx. For the first, he completed within two years a 900 page analysis of surveys made concerning the rural labourers in the East Elba region, at the same time when also completing his habilitation, on a completely different topic. For the second, no

academic work was involved at the moment, though he would repeat a few years later the *Verein* survey for the Congress. Still, membership in this association proved to be decisive for his work, as he encountered Nietzsche through it.

In order to locate and understand the impact the reading of Nietzsche had on Weber in between 1892-95, it is necessary to overview Weber's situation at the time. By spring 1892, Max Weber became an extremely talented and hard-working young scholar who was, however, deeply uneasy about his situation in the world. He performed his academic work extremely well, but was at cross purposes with his disciplinary vocation. Due to his sensitivity, he perceived that the world around him was shaking in its foundations, but was not yet able to express and analyse this feeling. Since his early childhood, he had an especially strong urge for independence, therefore suffered from paternal control, and his confidence was seriously impaired by his general sense of resignation. He felt trapped in a vicious circle, as the two things that would render him independent were a marriage and a job. However, due to his resignation, he could not commit himself to a marriage, was thinking rather of staying forever with his sister instead (Marianne Weber 1988, p. 168); and had equal misgiving in committing himself to an unwanted legal career.

Suddenly, within a matter of months, everything changed. Things began to move, both pushing Weber towards a definite commitment and at the same times enabling him to make the step. Concerning his professional life, in the summer of 1892 he substituted Goldschmidt, his dissertation supervisor who had become ill. It was just a matter of time until he would have been officially nominated as a replacement. At around the same time, he presented the results of the survey, drawing enthusiastic response, this time from economic circles. This opened the possibility of economic-historical work, as opposed to the dreaded legal career. The shift of Weber's interest from law to economics, not surprisingly, can be best documented in his letters written to Hermann Baumgarten (Scaff, 1984b, p. 87), just like these letters document best the evolution of his early political views (Mitzman

1985, p. 66). In the spring, he has also met Marianne for the second time, and this soon evoked emotions in him.

Weber had to make up his mind, to make some decisions. This was rendered possible by his encounter with Nietzsche. About this event, there is again an almost complete lack of information. The reasons for the silence will become apparent in due course. At first, it is necessary to present the story.

In all probability, Weber has first heard of Nietzsche through the *Christliche Welt* , a journal close to the Evangelic-Social Congress and edited by Weber's friend Martin Rade (Hennis 1988, 148; Scaff 1989, p. 196). On 28 July 1892, an article entitled "Beyond Good and Evil" has appeared on the top page of the journal, presenting the work of Nietzsche, "a remarkably original thinker" whose name is "almost mentioned daily" as "the Copernicus of the moral world" (Mayer 1892). (24) This could not have escaped the attention of Weber who has written articles since early childhood about the world historical significance of Christianity and whose earliest pieces show a marked similarity with the questions Nietzsche posed in the *Genealogy of Morals* , a text that would remain central for Weber's work. Thus, if at the age of 28 Durkheim was interested in Wundt's "genesis" of morals", at the same age Weber encountered a qute different "genealogy" of morals. The other writings of Nietzsche that have exerted particular impact on him in the early stage were the *Untimely Meditations* and *Zarathustra* . (25) The former diagnostised the decadence of the age, enabling Weber to draw a strategic line between his own abilities and powers and the decadence and resignation that was due to the impact of the age in which he happened to live and that weighed upon him. It gave him back his self-confidence. The latter further clarified this diagnosis, especially in the vision of the last men, taken up in the last pages of the *Protestant Ethic* while the vision of the eternal return could have given a virtual representation of the struggle Weber was engaged with himself. The concepts of the overman and the will to power both indicated a mode of analysis to be followed and sketched a way out. After 1892, the work of Nietzsche was

frequently debated in the Congress, and Weber took part in every meeting since the first reunion in 1890 until the eighth in 1897 (Aldenhoff 1987, p. 194).

The reading of Nietzsche gave Weber eventually both the determination and the tools to pursue a long-term project aiming at the understanding of his age. Concerning his life, however, the break was immediate. He overcome his deep resignation and was ready to make up his mind and marry. In order to decide, he first travelled to visit Emmy Baumgarten, to see whether he could - or should - make now the steps he was unwilling to do five years earlier. This was, of course, no longer possible. He embraced the second option, and became engaged soon to Marianne who also showed much more practical energy (Green 1974, p. 126).

This act, however, only solved one of the set of problems Weber was still struggling at that time, trying to overcome fully what he diagnostised around him, in which, in all evidence, he was looking at Marianne rather as a companion, a source of support. It is this inner struggle that marks his March 1893 address, given in front of the Verein. The address still contains the same words of resignation and epigonism as the November 1892 essay. Things, however, change by the fall of 1893. In both versions of the 'Developmental tendencies' essay, the mood is already different, much sharper. In between the Spring and Fall of 1893, Weber's whole tone and outlook of the world have changed. In the words of Hennis (1988, pp. 148-9), Weber has completed a transition from a general mood of resignation, the feeling of living in an age of epigons, or a negative pessimism, to a positive pessimism, the acquisition of a truly tragic perspective.

This points to the summer of 1893 as a decisive period in Weber's encounter with Nietzsche; a period particularly rich in significant moments and events. First, this was a period of transition for Weber, after the engagement and before the wedding, a time for settling accounts. Weber was definitely engaged in some major stocktaking, as his letters to Emmy and his sisters provide ample testimony to it. But it was also the time when a series of other

events happened, tightening even further the links between life and work. On 19 June, his uncle, Hermann Baumgarten died. For Weber, just as for Foucault, the death of persons they felt particularly close to were among the most crucial experiences in their lives. Hermann Baumgarten occupied a unique place in Weber's life, even more so than his father. If his father played a crucial role in the manner Weber grew into the world, Hermann Baumgarten majored this influence in getting Weber question what he took for granted. Furthermore, as the account of Scaff shows (1984b, pp. 85-7; 1989, pp. 14-5), the influence of Baumgarten has very important parallels with that of Nietzsche. It is, therefore, safe to assume that the death of Hermann Baumgarten may have been a catalyst in the way Nietzsche further stamped Weber.

In the same period a major development occurred in Weber's academic career. When deciding to marry, Weber had to accommodate himself with the prospect of a legal career. However, just in July 1893, as if out of the blue, the news reached Weber that he may be promoted to a position in economics. Though the appointment fell through this time, partly due to a not fully clear affair involving his father and the Prussian minister of education, Althoff, the offer soon returned. In January 1894, Weber obtained again the first place on the list, and by 1 April 1894, he became appointed as a regular professor to Freiburg (Tribe 1995).

The new opening, the possibility of a career in economics as opposed to law, just like the decisive second reading of Nietzsche, also came in summer 1893. In itself, this remains a conjecture. But the unlikely link Weber could have made between economics and Nietzsche can be reinforced by a series of facts. First, Weber became infatuated with economics because of its practical relevance as opposed to law, its closeness to politics and the nation; an interpretation confirmed by the Freiburg address. Second, for various reasons, neither reading Knies nor Marx was enough to turn Weber over to economics. The impulse of Knies was not strong enough, while Marx presented the danger that he

could be misunderstood. He needed a distance from Marx and thus stayed in law. The reading of Nietzsche immediately created this distance for him that was also demonstrable for others. He no longer had to fear the spectre of Marx. Third, he repeatedly stated that economics at that time was a young and flexible science (Marianne Weber 1988, p. 200; Scaff 1989, p. 27). Fourth, Weber considered economics as a "science of man" (Tribe, 1995; Hennis, 1988, 1996). Both these arguments were positively Nietzschean. Fifth, in talks given in between 1894 and 1897, Weber afforded himself a much more explicit, even "brutal" language concerning the economy and politics, close to the logic of class struggles. (26) Without Nietzsche and his psychological language, such expressions could only have been read as Marxist manifestos. Therefore, Weber could not have taken up a position in economics without the influence of Nietzsche; and, conversely, Nietzsche's effect reinforced him in his desire to get away from law and into economics.

The second reading of Nietzsche during the summer of 1893 was a crucial experience for Weber. It has left a profound mark on him, stamped his thinking forever, altered the way he perceived the world. It enabled him to combine serious reflection and academic work with his personal interests, helped him to realise that it is possible to do both things at once. However, it left him with a crucial dilemma in the short run. Such an experience would have required a period of digestion. Weber later became, very much aware of the need for such a break, but was not in the position now to afford such a luxory. Quite the contrary, he had to take up a position in economics, in a field where he himself needed to learn much. This was a risk taken, with the promise of turning economics into a "Nietzschean" science of man. This same risk, however, also held another promise. If the fact of marrying deprived him from the possibility of a period of digestion, it gave him the promise of a companion. Weber intended since the start his marriage as a close companionship. On the basis of his own experience of dependence, he became very sympathetic to the women's movement. He realised that a certain kind of independence is a precondition of human dignity, and wanted his

wife to be an independent person, orienting her towards academic interests, being the first German professor in this regards. Even just before wedding, they were working together on the publication of the survey results, much to the dismay of their parents.

However, a full intellectual companionship would have required that Marianne also read and appreciate Nietzsche. In the same movement and configuration when Weber wanted to transform economics into a "Nietzschean" direction, there are a few telling signs indicating that Weber also tried to "initiate" Marianne in the summer of 1894. The aim was not to indoctrinate Marianne into a dogmatic Nietzscheanism, rather give her access to strength and courage to have an independent mind. In a 12 July 1894 letter, evidently referring to the *Zarathustra* and previous discussions, he asks Marianne whether she wants more reading material to be sent her, ""or is the 'Overman' tormenting you enough for the time being?"" (Scaff 1989, p. 128), while a letter sent two weeks later repeats the reference to Nietzsche (ibid.). Within less than two months, as a present for their first wedding anniversary, he gave his wife the full series of Max Klinger's etchings. Klinger was considered as the foremost representative of Nietzschean art at the period.

The 'Overman', however, proved too much to swallow for Marianne. Weber started the letter of 26 July 1894 with the following words: "[y]our note still testifies to a significant impairment of the spirit, but that is good and healthy" (quoted in Hennis, 149). The hopes that Marianne would eventually digest the experience proved to be unfounded. The references to Nietzsche disappear from the correspondance, and the wedding present was disposed of in the first possible occasion, the first move the Webers were making in Heidelberg in 1906. And if reference was made to Nietzsche in letters addressed to other persons, Marianne made it sure that it would not get into print. Thus, in the *Biography* , she devoted five full pages to a letter Weber wrote in 1907 about the essay of Otto Gross (pp. 375-80). Apart from minor editorial corrections, she only omitted two

rather significant details. First, she failed to indicate that the letter was addressed to Else and not Edgar Jaffe; and second, she simply cut out the penultimate paragraph in which Weber made a distinction between the proper and improper uses of Nietzsche (MWG II/5, pp. 402-3). In her studies, again at the first possible occasion, Marianne selected another "master" instead of Nietzsche: Heinrich Rickert.

Just in the period when Weber was trying to "initiate" her wife to Nietzsche, he also produced some of the most awovedly Nietzschean pieces of work, the most important being his famous 1895 Freiburg inagural address. Weber used the formal occasion to reveal himself fully, presenting both his identity and the research interest he wanted to pursue. He described himself by three identification: he was a political economist (of the historical school), a bourgeois, and a German (Weber 1980, pp. 439-40, 444, 437). He also defined his Nietzschean research interest, the concern with the development of *Menschentum* . The fact that Weber specified his work and identity in the same act gave mutual weight to both. But it carried a serious danger. A public revelation of identity, especially during such a solemn occasion, carries a huge weight, especially for someone with the character of Weber. It is difficult to retract them. However, as Weber was soon to realise, within a few years all the projects and identities he committed himself to around 1893 and reinforced in 1895 were seriously threatened.

For a time, his statements reflected his confidence that he can be an academic political economist, keeping his commitments to his class and nation, and yet continue a research project which is fundamentally inspired by Marx and Nietzsche. This is reflected in his two main lectures given after the inaugural address: a 1896 talk on the social basis of the dissolution of Ancient civilisation and a 1897 address on the German industrial state that, by talking of capitalism as a fate, condensed Marx and Nietzsche into a single expression. However, in a short time interval, during another summer, this time in 1897, the tensions suddenly mounted on all fronts, declenching a breakdown.

Part of the story, the family feud, has already been hinted at by Meinecke in 1926, taken up shortly by Gerth and Mills in 1948, and elaborated in 1970 in a rather bombastical manner by Mitzman. On 14 June 1897 (Scaff 1989, pp. 73-4), in the outbreak of a protracted period of hidden conflict, Weber showed his father out of his house. A few weeks later, on 10 August, Max Weber Sr. died, never reconciled with his son. According to Mitzman, this was sufficient to explain why Weber was unable to write for five and talk for nineteen years. Such an account, however, first of all fails to explain the reasons for Weber's irritability. This, however, was not located in a family history, rather in the tensions he had about his work and life, concerning both major decisions he took on the basis of his reading of Nietzsche — his marriage as a companionship of equals and his switch to economics.

Weber turned to economics as a "science of man" and as a practical science that stayed closely in touch with reality. However, as he now had to realise, economics was just on the threshold of an epochal change, the marginal revolution. Just as he had to realise that Marianne would never be his "Nietzschean" companion, he would likewise never make a "Nietzschean" science out of economics. Therefore, just at the moment when, from the outside, he seemed to have reached the height of his career, holding the prestigeous chair of Knies at Heidelberg, he realised that his hopes were all lost. The realisation that the shift in economics placed his interests at the margins of the discipline are contained in his 1897-98 course outlines that were based on his systematic reflections on the state of economics (Tribe 1995).

Given the available pieces of evidence, it is not possible to date exactly the moment when Weber could have arrived at that realisation. However, it is possible to make again some informed guesses. Weber accepted the offer to Heidelberg in October 1896. Since that moment, he must have been preoccupied about the task of teaching economics as a Heidelberg professor, the heir of Knies. However, he still had to teach in Freiburg during the winter 1896-97 semester. The spring break of 1897 was spent with the move

and related distractions. Therefore, though the question must have been in Weber's mind, he could not have done serious and conclusive reflection before the summer of 1897, helped by his first, transitory Heidelberg semester. The course outline is dated April 1898 by Käsler, but according to Tribe, this was already given to the students for the winter 1897-98 semester that started in October. All this points to the summer of 1897 as the moment of reckoning when Weber reflected upon the state of economics.

The fact that the breakdown was not simply due to a family family feud - this acted only as a catalyst -, but to problems related to Marianne and economics can rely upon another telling proof. According to Marianne, the decisive moment of the crisis occured not during the summer or the fall of 1897, but sometimes during the end of the winter term 1897-98. As often, the exact date is not given, but Marianne provides, and probably without any conscious intention, something that nobody else could have given. The date, in fact, can be defined with considerable precision. The winter term in Germany ends in late February — early March. However, as late as 16 February 1898, Weber was so well that he could take part in a public meeting, the debate of a talk Jellinek gave a week ago about the women's movement, and even talked for one quarter of an hour. From the account Marianne gave of the decisive breakdown, this meeting could not have taken place after it.

The accounts of Weber's speech are contradictory. According to the newspaper reports, he supported Jellinek; but according to Marianne, this was rather ironic, and Weber really came out in favor of the women's movement (p. 229). Whatever is the truth, it is evident that Weber had to make some rather delicate manouvering around the theme that could not fail to be stressful, adding to the tensions he has already accumulated. But there is something more. On the very page where Marianne told the story of this meeting, she introduces immediately a new topic. This is the first time she mentions the name of Else von Richthofen who became Weber's first female student in Heidelberg, one of the first

ever female graduates in Germany, even though she got to know the Weber couple already the summer of 1894 or 95. (27) There was no inherent reason for bringing this episode into the storyline here, except for the fact that this was the way Marianne's recollection functioned - this time, I would argue, with admirable and probably unconscious sensitivity. (28).

At this point, on the basis of all the evidence listed, it is possible to give an account of Weber's illness and its significance for the experiential basis of the oeuvre. The illness was not "caused" by a single factor, whether overwork or a family conflict. It was rather an event that responded to a complex situation. This was the joint problematisation of the major elements in Weber's identity mentioned in his inaugural talk, with the simultaneous failure in the risky decisions he undertook in 1892-93. After the Nietzsche experience, Weber got married to gain a companion — but his wife did not truly understand him and refused to follow his intellectual pursuit. He switched to economics in order to transform it, but the discipline shifted at the same time to the opposite direction. At the same time, Weber encountered a young women who, both emotionally and in her professional activities, could have been a true companion, making the realisation of his wrong decision even more painful. All this was rendered even more acute by the guilts related to the death of his father, the problematisation of his bourgeois identity. The situation was unbearable, yet there was no way out. It does not require much intuition to classify the result as a typical example of psychosomatic illness - a type of illness developed as a compensation and escape; an acceptable, "objective" way to deal with conflicts in life that otherwise prove to be unsolvable.

The severity of the situation can be supported with three additional considerations. First, partly due to the fact that he could not take time out to digest the experience, partly to the need to read into economics, Weber did not come up with a proper new research topic - though there are allusions that he has already started to think about the PE in this period. Second, in 1897 Weber was 33 years old. This does not say much to us, but did so

for the Germans of the late 19th century. According to tradition, Jesus was 33 when he died, and therefore this age represented something of a benchmark, an occasion to reflect upon past achievement and to give account of oneself. It was, for e.g, very much present in the concerns of Nietzsche when he was 33. Third, adding to this configuration, it was in late 1894 that the first major new posthumous work of Nietzsche, the *Antichrist* was published. This event could easily have been very disturbing for Weber, as he certainly could not share either the style or the substance of this book, and may have been put by this fact even more on the defensive side.

Weber collapsed when all the decisions to which he committed himself under the spell of the reading experience of Nietzsche led to disappointment or a dead end. He started to recover the moment when a novel reading experience of Nietzsche gave back his strength and focus. This point again requires a careful reconstruction of the exact conditions.

Between 1898 and 1901, Weber was very seriously ill, completely rendered idle. On the basis of a few bits and pieces Weber managed to publish in 1899 and 1901, Käsler (1988) claims that the crisis was less serious than asserted as, after all, Weber did write and publish. This is simply unacceptable, and is due to the insertion of a legal model of subjectivity into the dynamics of thought. Weber desperately tried to work during this period, but couldn't. He started his seminars, and failed again; tried to prepare for lectures and was not able to make sense of his own notes. A claim that after all, this was not that serious is simply at the same level of (mis)understanding as Weber's mother was, to whom Weber desperately tried to convey the message that his illness is real and serious, physical, and not just a weakness of the will. An elementary respect for Weber requires that one should not return to this stage and treat the few short introductions Weber wrote to the works of others as insignificant in so far as his work is concerned. The writing of these pieces was of the same character as the writing out of checks: legally Weber was the person

responsible for the act, but it was not part of his work, as during this period work was simply impossible for him.

After the decisive failure to overcome the illness in 1898-99, all signs indicate that Weber resigned to the possibility that this may have become his permanent condition; that he may never be able to work again. Even during the last years of his life, he considered ever bit of his strength regained as miraculous, always ready to expect an immediately relapse. Given the seriousness of his condition, he needed a shock to regain health and strength, and to overcome again the resignation. This new impetus was provided by another reading of Nietzsche, the first edition of the collection of posthumous notes published in November 1901 under the title *The Will to Power*. (29) Weber was then 37 years old.

When the book was published, Weber was in Italy, almost since a whole year. Though the exact details and the sequential order are still difficult to establish, in October-November 1901 he was in Rome and, after a long period of vacation, he began to feel himself better. He started to read again, although only works not closely related to his academic interests, and even considered planning for his summer semester. It was probably in this period that Michelangelo's ceiling of the Sixtus chapel has captivated him (Jaspers 1964, p. 259). However, the single most important event during this period, considered by Marianne both as a proof and an intrument in the improvement of Weber's health, was a visit his friend Friedrich Naumann paid to them during the Christmas period.

No details are available of the discussions Weber had with Naumann. One could assume that at that time, Weber may not have been well informed about events in Germany. One thing, however, is sure. The publication of the *Will to Power* created a sensation in Germany. It is very unlikely that after this visit, Weber remained uninformed about this publication, and was not immediately interested in reading the book. It is even probable that Naumann, who was one of his closest friends and keenly aware of Weber's interest in Nietzsche (after all, he was

"converted" by Weber's avowedly "Nietzschean" Freiburg talk), had carried a copy with him.

Weber's subsequent acts fully support the inference that he not only regained his lost vitality by this new encounter, but this time, he was prepared not to repeat the errors of the first. First, if about a decade ago he changed into economics as a result of his reading of Nietzsche, now he handed in his resignation. This was not the first time this happened with Weber. He has done the same thing in December 1899. But this time the situaton was quite different. In the logic of the *Biography* , whenever Weber was feeling better, he was trying to take up teaching again; whenever he was doing worse, he lost hopel and attempted to resign his post. This logic worked so far, even up to the fall of 1901 when, due to the improvement of his condition, he was thinking again about going back to teaching. Therefore, one could expect that the resignation handed in in April 1902 was the proof of a worsening of his condition. However, there are no signs of such a relapse. Quite the contrary, Weber was reading philosophical works again, and soon after his return to Heidelberg, he would start to write his first work after a gap of almost five years, the essay on his former teacher and predecessor, Knies. The decision, therefore, was not motivated by his increased unability to work, but, quite the contrary, exactly by the hope that he may have regained his ability to work and write. He only realised that this work could not be fitted into economics, or, indeed, into any conventional academic work at all. He needed all the time he could have to digest and recover; to work out his approach in full.

Second, if a decade ago he counted on Marianne as his companion at work, he now decided to leave his wife uninformed about the whole matter. Subsequently, Nietzsche has hardly ever been mentioned in his work. However, Weber would not have been himself if he had not have left an allusion, almost a secret code to it. The solution is quite simple: whenever you read "Rickert" in Weber, beware: it may be a hidden allusion to Nietzsche. This also resolves a long enigma, related to the exact link between Weber and Rickert. (30)

In a number of well-known passages, Weber has repeatedly stated his debt to the works of Rickert. Such claims were often taken at face value, leading a number of investigators on the trail of discovering the exact nature of the connection (Burger 1987; Merk 1990; Oakes 1988). However, these references have left many of his best interpretators and closest acquaintances perplexed, who had problems in tracing this influence. This goes back to Troeltsch (Fleischmann 1964, pp. 198-9), and the close link between Weber and Rickert has been decisively severed by Henrich (1952). The point has been taken up recently by Scaff (1989) and Hennis (1988) who argued that instead of Rickert, Weber relied upon Nietzsche. They have made it clear that, for e.g., when referring to Rickert's views on values and cultures (Weber 1977, pp. 176-7, fn. 16), the actual substance of his argument owed clearly not to Rickert, but to Nietzsche.

This still leaves us with the puzzle concerning the reasons for Weber's allusions to Rickert. According to Troeltsch, these were merely acts of politeness and deference toward a close colleague and friend, which simply does not provide a sufficient reason. Honigsheim (1968, p. 18) does not lead much further, claiming that Weber, due to modesty, underestimated his own independence from Rickert. The explanation of Oakes (1987, p. 444) is even bizarre, as he asserts that Weber simply did not understand Rickert. This implies the anachronism that Rickert was right: we should forget about Weber, and try to understand what Rickert has "really" meant.

The solution, however, lies in a closer reading of Weber's texts, as Weber's acknowledgements are rather ambivalent. Thus, he praised Rickert for logical completeness (letter of April 1902, quoted in Marianne Weber 1988, p. 260), and stated that he was "one of our best logicians" (letter of 16 April 1905, quoted in Hennis 1988, p.158). However, in his methodological writings, Weber always emphasised that his interest is not in the manner professional philosophers (logicians) reflect upon methodological issues, but in the manner in which the practitioners of sciences

and history reflect upon what they are doing. (31) On another note, in the same letter, Weber was careful in pointing out that nobody has ever characterised Rickert as a great man (Hennis, 1988, 158). Indeed, he has reserved the highest praise for somebody else, Alois Riehl, stating that ""if Kant were to return today, he would find only Riehl's kind of philosophizing adequate"". (32)

This statement evokes another complex set of relations between Weber, Nietzsche and Rickert. Riehl played an important role in the Webers' life, initiating the couple into Freiburg society in a time of evident difficulty, and was also the first professor of philosophy who wrote a monograph on Nietzsche, taking him seriously. The book was published in 1897, and therefore Nietzsche had to be at the center of Riehl's interest in 1894. When Rickert came to Freiburg in 1894, shortly after —and with the active help — of Max Weber, he replaced Riehl. But Rickert has accomplished another, indirect replacement, related to another "initiation rite". After the summer and fall of 1894 when Weber was trying to initiate Marianne both to academic work and to Nietzsche, Marianne switched to Rickert the first time such an occasion presented itself, and "became Rickert's zealous student" (Marianne Weber 1988, p. 205).

These facts, together with third of the maxims Weber taught to his students, "know how to keep silent" (Loewenstein 1966), support the plausibility of the strategy Weber followed with respect to the subtle game of references to Nietzsche and Rickert. (33)

Weber's possible reasons for his silence can be summarised in the following manner. Weber decided, probably immediately in 1901-02, to keep silent about the impact Nietzsche had on his potential recovery, as he was a person struck by a serious (psychosomatic) sickness, fundamentally at odds with the official academic establishment of his time, deeply critical and apprehensive in the manner Nietzsche has been generally read and understood, stating repeatedly that it is usually the worst in Nietzsche that has been picked up by his devout readers; who tried and failed to

transform economics into a Nietzschean "science" of man, and who tried and failed to initiate his wife into Nietzsche. Therefore he had all the the reasons, related to the cardinal virtues (Plato, *Republic* , 433b; Nietzsche, *Daybreak* , No. 556), to keep silent about the matter in all three set of relations one could establish in life. In the relations to self, silence was a matter of prudence (to avoid relapse). In the relations to familiar others, it was a matter of courtesy and magnanimity towards his wife. Finally, in the relations to others it was a matter of prudence again, to avoid misunderstandings. And if somebody would charge here concerning the other cardinal virtues, courage and honesty, one could respond in two ways: first, by pointing out - in the manner Socrates has done in the *Apology* (31c) when he was charged of not taking part of political life, stating that he was not lacking courage in actual war - that Weber showed enough courage in actual conflict, whether in public activities before the war or in his "parrhesiastic" lectures after the war; and second, by making a distinction between courage and audacity with Aristotle (*Nicomachean Ethics* , 1115a-1116a), the alleged duty to always immediately disclose everything would be an incitement to audacity, not to courage, as it would have violated in Weber's case other cardinal virtues in all three sets of relations.

The third major point concerning the reorganisation effected around 1902 was related not to his decisions made in 1893, but to the commitments made about his identity in 1895. If seven years ago, he defined himself publicly as a political economics and as a bourgeois, now he took up these two identities as the objects of his analysis, since his very first essays. In Roscher and Knies, he decided to analyse the extent to which the framework of historical economics still exerted an impact on the minds of his own generation, while the *Protestant Ethic* became a highly autobiographical account of the emergence of the modern bourgeois as a type.

Fourth, in embarking on his projects, Weber was using the example of Nietzsche in minute details. There are two pieces of circumstantial evidence, both related to the heart of the dynamics

of Weber's work, that support such a reading. The first is that the type of essays he wrote immediately upon his recovery perfectly mirror the first publications of Nietzsche. Nietzsche started with a major and highly personal work that has immediately created a considerable, but quite hostile and incomprehending response (*Birth of Tragedy*), continued with critical works related to his age and the kind of audience it represented (the first two *Untimely Meditations*), then went into giving an account of his masters (the third and fourth *Untimely Meditations*), and ended up being seriously ill in 1875-76. Weber started from the other end, with a recovery from illness. It is therefore no surprise that he pursued the same road in the other direction. Thus, he started by settling his account with his teachers and their discipline, political economy, (34) only to move on to the basic questions of the methodology of his age, and at that time starting also his own major personal work, the *Protestant Ethic* that carries the analogy with Nietzsche's first major work even in its title.

As the account so far has already made it clear, Weber was far from copying slavishly Nietzsche. Quite the contrary, he only wanted to use the experience of Nietzsche in the best possible manner in order to accomplish what Nietzsche has failed to do, and provide a disciplined reflection on the problems the oeuvre of Nietzsche has helped to bring to surface. It is important to be quite precise at this point. Weber's task was not a systematisation in the ordinary sense, the alleged discovery or the subjective construction of a closed system out of Nietzsche's ideas. This would have been against the spirit of Nietzsche, while Weber's aim was to complete the work in its spirit. He only wanted to combine and use to their full potential the insights Nietzsche developed in his fragments but was unable to put together, in spite of all his attempts. <u>This</u> was the task that the editors of the *Will to Power* evidently wanted to complete, but were not in the position accomplishing; and <u>this</u> was the task that Weber suddenly found for himself, that gave him the impulse to break through the cage of his illness. It is a commonplace today that Nietzsche's sister, to increase attention, has falsified the *Will to Power* into the culmination of Nietzsche's work. Weber could not

have been misdirected by such claims, but he also noticed that the attempt was there. This gave Weber his task. His whole theory of action should be interpreted as an attempt to make the most of Nietzsche, as the completion of his own efforts to take up and carry to fruition what Nietzsche has failed to accomplish in his last plans and notes. (35)

However, Weber learned not only from his own mistakes, but also from the fate of Nietzsche. He realised the dangers of closing oneself into a personal project, off from public and academic recognition, where he may well have guessed the roots of Nietzsche's eventual madness. Weber therefore considered it crucial to stay in the public view, to exert a public presence. For this purposes, the moment he realised that he was able to write again, he immediately searched for the proper outlet for his works. He found it in the form of overtaking the *Archiv* , a journal close in orientation to the *Verein* . For this, he needed academic friends whom he could rely upon editing the journal. This was not missing. But he also needed something more, to gain control over the journal. This was granted to him in the following manner, again underlying the intimate links between Weber's research and life: Else von Richthofen, who married to Edgar Jaffé in 1902, obtained the *Archiv* for Max Weber from Edgar Jaffé as one of her wedding gifts (Factor 1988, p. 1; Roth 1988, p. xxxi). From this moment, publication in the *Archiv* represented a serious dual duty for Weber: an obligation towards the public to present the results of his work, and an obligation toward Edgar (and to Else) to keep it running — an obligation that dominates much of his correspondance with the Siebecks who ran the company that published the *Archiv* .

At this point, it is necessary to break off the story, as the focus is on the founding experiences of Weber's work. It is only possible to add two further remarks about Weber's "Nietzschean" theory of action, and the dynamics of his work after 1902. The fundamentally "Nietzschean" roots of Weber's theory of action are visible in the starting sections of his most important and best known methodological writings (1978, pp. 3-26; 1981). First,

Weber simply excludes repetitive, mass activity from the field of "his" sociology - although as "we" know it now, sociology as an empirical-statistical study does nothing but analyse exactly such mass phenomena. Any course on probability theory that underlies mathematical statistics starts with the law of large numbers. Second, in emphasising the subjective meaning of action he is not interested in the elusive object of the "true aim" the actor may have in his mind when doing something. His interest is not oriented toward the substantive characteristics of action, rather to the specific modality or form of a certain behavior as action, which resides in the actor's aim to make a difference. Such an intention is not at all present trivially in everything a human being does. Quite the contrary, in all societies where ritual plays a major role, one is expected not to behave differently. Acting with the intention of making a difference is restricted there to particular actors performing certain sacred deeds in particular occasions. In one word, action as action, from the perspective of the person who is acting, is always rooted in the extra-ordinary, whether it is consciously intended or not. In Weber's writings, there is an intricate interplay between his definition of religious action and of action in general, implying that originally, the two expression meant the same thing (1978, pp. 399-401; 1981, pp. 151-3). In this way, on the basis of Nietzsche's idea of the eternal return, it is possible to go to the bottom of Weber's diagnosis of modernity. What is most specific, and ultimately self-defeating, in modernity is not simply the question of rationality, but the fixed idea, the pathological conscious strive of making a difference with every deed, in every move. This is also ultimately self-defeating, as a difference can only be made against a background of sameness, of identity, of order. If this background disappears, so does the possibility of a difference. Weber's logic helps us to map the ultimate sameness of the world of rational expectations, allows us to understand the most recent economic theories, developed more than half a century after he died.

Second, Weber's work after 1902 was not a smooth development. He not only had to fight with the lasting marks of his illness, but also literally had to struggle, almost until the end, with the need

to work out the exact stakes of his work, a project that approached the fundamental problems of the age in a highly autobiographical manner. Thus, in the summer of 1906, due to the innocent quiery of his publisher about a second, book edition of the *Protestant Ethic* , he almost had a second breakdown, as he realised that he did not, and still could not, specify the exact problem underlying the work (MWG II/5, p. 119). In his new recovery, he was helped by three factors. The first was another methodological exercise, this time aiming at the theoretical elaboration of the proper manner in which a "second edition" should be completed (Weber 1977, pp. 59-61). The second was another Nietzsche reading experience, the publication of the last major posthumous work, *Ecce Homo* , in 1908. This work added two points that were not contained in Nietzsche's works published so far and that were of fundamental importance for Weber. First, it has explicitly thematised, through an autobiographical account, the idea of the creative role of illness. Second, it has described as the central personal experience underlying the *Zarathustra* the vision of the eternal return. This could have helped Weber in focusing his theory of action.

The third and most important sources were the "anticritical essays", four polemical pieces written in between 1907 and 1910 in which Weber defended the *Protestant Ethic* against its first public critics. As Hennis has convincingly shown, these essays were much more them products of idle polemics. In them, Weber had the chance of further clarifying and defining the underlying problem of his book - something he was not able to accomplish in the original edition. (36)

However, even Hennis did not provide a full account of these essays. First, more then just defining Weber's problem, they had an immediate effect. (37) Second, it is necessary to give an account how these essays could have had such an impact. The framework of this paper does provide such an explanation. The essays were products of a special type of reading experience, the effects of Weber reading Weber, belonging to the genre rediscovered by Michel Foucault under the concepts of

"techniques of self" or the "writing of the self" (Foucault 1983, 1984). This can also be defined as a special kind of meditative exercise helping one to gain focus about the direction of the work. This also helps us to explain the third major point, the reason why these texts were so neglected in the otherwise enormous Weber scholarship.

The reason, on a first look, is simple. Weber always spoke in a disparaging manner about these articles, as polemics that were imposed on him and only gave trouble (Honigsheim 1968, p. 105). The secondary literature simply took his words for granted here. However, there are some good reasons to doubt the straightforwardness of these comments and to argue that these essays represented the third major episode in his life over which he decided to keep silent. In order to substantiate this claim, it is again necessary to treat the facts closely.

In the second anticritical essay, Weber made the claim that the reason why he was not continuing with the project sketched at the end of the *Protestant Ethic* was the publication of Troeltsch's essay 'The social teaching of Christianity' that appeared in an early 1908 issue of the *Archiv* . This argument would later be taken up in the last footnote of *Protestant Ethic* , repeated by Marianne Weber (p. 331) and finally taken for granted by almost everyone. Yet, this claim is plainly incorrect.

First, Troeltsch's essay appeared three years after the *Protestant Ethic* . During this time, Weber has not even started to work on the programme outlined. Second, Weber's argument implies that Troeltsch had a negative impact on his work. Yet, as a 20 June, 1908 letter of the publisher makes it clear, it should have happened the opposite way. In this letter, Siebeck urged Weber to work on the book version as the publication by Troeltsch could help to sell it. Weber's answer was more than a month late and negative: he did not have time for this (MWG II/5, p. 609). Finally, in the 1920 edition of the *Protestant Ethic* , Weber himself provided the decisive argument against his own idea. A simple contrasting of the first and last footnotes shows that Weber cannot

be right concerning the impact of Troeltsch. In the first footnote, he states that most of the suggestions he received from theologians could not be incorporated simply because the fundamental thrust of the book lay elsewhere: "What to a theologian is valuable in his religion cannot play a very large part in this study." (p. 185). In the next page, he even draws attention specifically to Troeltsch's work, claiming that it provided a "welcome complement and confirmation" of his own views, but stating that Troeltsch "is principally concerned with the doctrines of religion, while I am interested rather in their practical results". If this be so - and here we have no reason for doubt - then the claims of the last footnote cannot be accepted.

This episode had a further consequence. Between Troeltsch and the anti-critical essays, the same kind of transference happened as between Rickert and Nietzsche. Troeltsch has also become a "hook", a mask, an "alias" behind which Weber could hide his change of strategy due to his work on self. This was also not without consequences, visible in the long rivalry between Troeltsch and Weber concerning originality, and in Troeltsch's behavior after Weber's death.

There is an additional supporting episode. In a 29 November 1910 letter, written shortly after Weber has completed the 'Anticritical last word', he asked a copy of the first part of his original *Protestant Ethic* essay from his publisher (MWG II/6, p. 699). He explains that he wanted to bind the volume, but as he gave away his own copy at the time of publication, he had no copies left. This, however, is a very strange claim. By that time, Weber has completed four anticritical essays. His main argument was that the opponents failed to perceive the problem he was addressing in the book and, according to Hennis, also recognised that he was not fully clear in stating it himself. Now, it was exactly the first essay that was entitled "The Problem". It is all but impossible to believe either that throughout this period, he did not even look into his own essay, or that he was not working on his own copy. Quite the contrary, a good reason for asking an extra offprint may well have been that due to the lot of work, his copy had become messy.

This leads to the posing of the following question: why would have Weber preferred to remain silent about this episode, even feeling ashamed? The answer, however, is again quite trivial. Reading one's own work classifies, from the outside, as an excessive concern with oneself, an act of self-love or narcissism; from the inside, as a spiritual meditation. Both are fundamental sins for a Protestant, committed to activity in the world and the love of others. Weber was led to these exercises by the force of circumstances, but found them exceptionally productive. This happened still not without a feeling of guilt, or at least serious reservation. Therefore, he did everything he could in order to hide them.

5. The formative experiences of Durkheim and Weber compared

At this moment, it is possible to return to the question of the lack of direct connection between Durkheim and Weber. The two thinkers, far from exhibiting fundamentally different universes, as it has often been alleged, not only touched orbit, but shared strikingly much in their formation. Most of the names encountered by Durkheim, like Schmoller and Wagner (and especially their teachers, Roscher and Knies), Ihering, even Wundt, figure prominently in the Weberian oeuvre as well. However, the types of experiences they had when encountering these works and the dynamics of their paths were fundamentally different.

First, Ihering was not simply one of the texts Weber has read when studying law. He was Weber's professor during the latter's studies in Göttingen. The coincidence with Durkheim's involvement is again remarkable. Weber was in Göttingen from about October 1885 to April 1886. It was exactly the time when Ihering worked on the continuation of his work discussed by Durkheim (1975, vol. 1., p.297), and also when Durkheim was in Germany, though he evidently did not meet Ihering. Moreover, studying under Ihering was not a lost experience for Weber. As Turner and Factor have recently shown (1994), much of the freshness in Weber's sociological works, especially his theory of

action, derived from the fact that he applied, in a fundamentally remodeled manner, some of Ihering's categories. It would still be wrong simply to argue that as Ihering was therefore important both to Durkheim and Weber, this immediately establishes contacts between the two, as their relation to Ihering was radically different. For Durkheim, this was an innovative experience against his background in Comte and Spencer, Renouvier and Espinas. For Weber, it was exactly Ihering that was his scholastic background, in contrast to which, but also using it, he later developed his own approach.

The situation with Schmoller and Wagner is much the same. Weber knew both of them well, as they worked together in the *Verein* - Wagner was even present in the Evangelic-Social Congress. Yet, within a broad agreement for social policy, Weber was fundamentally at cross purposes with most of their basic ideas. As this issue is of considerable importance, it deserves some discussion.

It has been often asserted that Schmoller exerted a major influence on Weber, though the claim has recently come under fire. (38) It is therefore worthwhile to revisit the experiential components of the Weber-Schmoller encounter. First, Max Weber was not a student of Schmoller's. He studied with Knies and became his successor at Heidelberg. It was his brother Alfred who studied under Schmoller (Demm 1987, p. 89). Second, Max Weber has honoured this distinction. The first significant piece he wrote after his illness was on the occasion of the Knies *Festschrift* (though what he wrote did not much suit the occasion), while he refused to contribute to the Schmoller *Festschrift* just a few months after he finished the last segment of the three-part Roscher-Knies essay (MWG II/5, p. 192). Third, however, he was not without respect for the work and especially the person of Schmoller. He wrote a letter in which he acknowledged the way Schmoller kept alive interest in historical thought "[a]t a time of the most barren economic rationalism" (Schön, 1987, p.59). Later, he was ready to take action in order to defend the personal merits of Schmoller.

However, the nature of their substantive differences is best seen in two major, ongoing debates in the Verein. The topics were quite important for Weber. and would be of especial relevance for the Weber (mis)reception as well. The first debate was around the question of bureaucracy, and involved first a heated exchange between Friedrich Naumann and Schmoller in the 1905 meeting (ibid., p. 63), while the second in the 1909 meeting (Boese 1939, pp. 133-5; Oberschall 1965, pp. 134-5). In both occasions, Weber spoke strongly against Schmoller's idea bureaucratic patronage, the latter's belief based on his close ties with state officials that a regime of officials, transcending party and class interests, provides for a neutral authority. The second major debate was in 1914, again in the Verein, on the topic of value freedom, where Weber took up again a position diametrically opposed to Schmoller's (Boese 1939, pp. 147-8; Krüger 1987, pp. 82-3; Schön 1987, pp. 67-8).

The roots of the intellectual as opposed to political connections between Weber and Schmoller were not due to similarity of methods and aim, rather were given by the fact that both Schmoller and Weber belonged to the same school. As Deploige has rightly pointed out, "Wagner and Schmoller had had immediate precursors in the founders of economic historicism - Roscher and Knies" (1938, p. 151). All four were founding members of the *Verein* (Boese 1939, pp. 242-9). Roscher and Knies were exactly the targets of Weber's first methodological article. In these essays, Weber talked as a person who has also belonged once to the historical school (Knies was his teacher in 1882-83 in Heidelberg, and in 1896 he inherited his very chair), but who felt the need to overcome this heritage. In the first footnote to the first essay, he justified his undertaking, the study of writers who already seem to be obsolete, in the following words: "It is a point of view which has been obsolete for quite some time, and no one in our discipline would waste his time criticising its *substantive* aspects today. *However, it would be a mistake to assume that for this reason the logical weaknesses which lie concealed within Roscher's position are in general*

clearer to us today than they were to him ." (p. 211, italics in original). The aim of Weber was to individuate what has been taken for granted in the position of Roscher and Knies, taken over by Schmoller and Wagner, in order to be able to think differently. (39) The aim of Durkheim was again the opposite, at the most fundamental level of intention and motivation. Though far from copying slavishly the German historical economists, he still wanted to reinvigorate French thought by the insertion of the very categories Weber has considered already obsolete. The same point can be repeated with respect to the quotation with which Durkheim started his account, the reference to the *Handbook* of Schonberg. Weber spent much of the last decade of his life in producing a new edition of Schonberg's *Handbook* — that eventually grew into *Economy and Society* .

Finally, while Durkheim found Wundt's work so conducive to his undertaking, Weber was quite critical of it on several occasions. According to Schluchter, several of Weber's methodological articles were written explicitly against Wundt (1995, pp. 38-9). His major methodological article on "Objectivity" was a direct attack on the fundamental methodological principle of Wundt, closely followed by Durkheim, according to which the aims and methods of scientific investigations should depend on their object (Schön 1987, p. 60). Moreover, Weber also undertook a major research project in psychophysics, but analysed the works of Kraepelin, (40) made much less use of the works of Wundt, and his main conclusions were negative, questioning the relevance of such an endeavor for the understanding of society. In fact, this investigation did not originate with Max Weber: it was the idea of his brother, Alfred, who — as opposed to him — did show affinities with the methods and interests of Wundt (Schluchter 1995, pp. 67, 72).

The comparison can be complemented from the other end. All the major topics of Weber's other methodological essays do closely correspond to Durkheim's related writings. Weber analysed Eduard Meyer's reflections of the writing of history in 1906, while Durkheim the second edition of his anthropology in 1911 -

criticising exactly that aspect that Weber found its most important asset, the analysis of the contribution of the individual factors in history (Durkheim, vol 1., pp. 398-9). The correspondance between the essay on "objectivity", trying to specify the exact sense in which we can talk about the "objectivity" of cultural analysis contrasts sharply with Durkheim's firm belief in the objectivity of social facts and the need for a science of society. Finally, in the *Critique of Stammler* , many of Weber's most important claims can be read directly against the major tenets of Durkheim (see especially pp. 98-124).

The differences between Weber and Durkheim are located at the heart, the experiential bases of their whole thought. The major experience of Durkheim, his trip in Germany got him acquainted as new and revolutionary exactly with those currents of thought that were the background influences for Weber, but from which he tried to liberate his thought, as they were *mene, tekel, ufarsim* , and succeeded with the help of Nietzsche. The movement of their thought in their decisive experiences was therefore in the opposite direction - and if we consider thinking as a dynamic process and not as a static systematisation of ideas conceived as representations, then such questions of movement are of utmost significance.

In sum, in the relation between Durkheim and Weber, the issue is not simply one of a fundamental identity of purpose or a difference due to educational background, but there are crucial divergences one the basis of fundamentally similar formative influences. It is well known that, in spite of this fact, Parsons has succeeded to found modern social theory on the alleged convergence between Durkheim and Weber. It remains to be seen how he has accomplished this feat.

6. The major formative experiences of Parsons

It goes without saying that the denomination of Durkheim and Weber as the two great classics of sociology has been the singular achievement of Talcott Parsons (13 December, 1902 - 8 May, 1979). Before him, hardly anyone had the idea of connecting Weber and Durkheim. After him, this became a triviality. Parsons's work represented an epochal break. The question is the exact reason and the consequences of this fact. This can be answered by studying the experiential basis of Parsons's synthesis.

While in the case of Durkheim and Weber, it was necessary to rely upon rare pieces of information that until recently were scarcely if at all accessible, there are a number of available autobiographical writings by Parsons. This practice is not only different from Durkheim's and Weber's extreme privacy and reluctance to discuss themselves, but also from the cases of some of the most important thinkers of our age who, even though late in their life did accept to give autobiographical interviews, were not able to write autobiographical statements, due to the same resistance Durkheim and Weber had felt earlier (Elias 1991, Foucault 1982, Voegelin 1989). Combined with the fact that in these and other late reflections, Parsons was rather inclined to boast about his achievements, (41) this indicates not only a personality trait different from and less sympathic than Durkheim's and Weber's, but has different exigencies for the understanding of autobiographical claims, calling for a note of caution. Parsons's disclosures were not sudden revelations of truth in very concrete contexts, where one should balance the truth value due to the exceptional insights with possible reasons for deep conflict or antagonism, but were conscious constructions that were probably nfluenced by the same concerns as his reflections on the fate of his books.

The story, on a first look, cannot be more straightforward, and was told in most detail in a 1979 conference (Parsons 1980). Parsons started with the by then well-known fact that he has not

even heard the name of Weber until the summer of 1925, his arrival to Heidelberg, and has read, as the first thing of the oeuvre, and not by "mere chance", the *Protestant Ethic* in the fall. Though he does not use the word "revelation" in his account, gets quite close: "this reading had an immediate and powerful impact on me. It gripped my intense interest immediately and I read it straight through ... as if it were a detective story." (p.39). He later repeats the primacy of Weber for his work, stating that he would not have been able to complete *Structure* "without the exposure to Weber's work", and that the book "established something of a position for me personally" (p. 41).

Again, we do not have the slightest reason, nor right, to doubt the basic truth of the story. And yet, there are some puzzling facts. First, given the fundamental *reading experience* Weber represented for Parsons, how could it be that since decades, there is a very strong "revisionism" by Weber scholar against the Parsonian reading, while there is hardly anything comparable by Durkheim scholars? Second, apart from Weber, Parsons gave a detailed reason for his choice of Pareto (the impact of Henderson), while the selection of Marshall was rather self-evident, given his interest in economics (p. 41). However, concerning Durkheim, he is satisfied with the vague claim that at that time there was "much discussion" about his works — a vagueness all the more strange as there is a wide agreement today that Durkheim was even more important was the overall framework of Parsons's work than Weber (Alexander 1990, p. 7). This reluctance is quite puzzling. If Weber had some reasons to be silent about Nietzsche in the start of the century and Durkheim was reluctant to acknowledge his German connection just before W.W.I., there seems to be no similar reason for Parsons to pass over the reasons of his reliance upon the work of Durkheim.

Let us start with a rather trivial point: what have Parsons read exactly? As an aside, he mentions that he could not read the book through immediately, as he had to respect the library opening hours, not owning yet a copy. But there was a more basic problem: at that time, there was no such thing as the book version of the

Protestant Ethic . The essays were published as part of the first volume of GARS (*Collected Essays on the Sociology of Religions*), and this fact did matter a lot to Weber who he repeatedly refused the offer to publish the *Protestant Ethic* as a separate book. The first volume of the GARS formed a unity for Weber, and this point was of considerable significance. The "rediscovery" of the *Protestant Ethic* as an independent unit has been the achievement of Parsons. It was not due to a novel problem or a new way of seeing that this book taught him; quite the contrary, it was because it led him to reestablish contact with his own identity. This immediate restriction of his reading of Weber was probably due to unreflected autobiographical perspective. This imposes the first limit on the way Parsons has read Weber.

The second problem is also hardly perceivable. Parsons stated that the reading of Weber had a major impact on his German dissertation (p. 39). This work, however, had no public impact at that time. *Structure* was published exactly ten years later. It is a question whether the major book was also published under the unbroken impact of the Weber reading; that the new readings represented no major reorientation. Parsons certainly believed so, as he stated that Durkheim's work "fitted into my plans exceedingly well and gradually the plan to write a general study" had taken place (p. 41). It remains to be seen whether the claims about such a "graduality" would withstand the test of a close reading of the actual historical record.

Four facts deserve mentioning about early experiences (Camic 1991; Martel 1979; Parsons 1969, pp. 59-61; 1970; Wearne 1985). First, Parsons was brought up in a Protestant environment. His father was an ordained Congregational minister who also belonged to the "Social Gospel" movement that was strongly interested in economic and social reform. Second, Parsons grew into a not only religious but also academic setting. Between 1892 to 1917, his father was professor of English, dean of the Department of Arts and Sciences and vice president of Colorado College. Third, the only dramatic period in Parsons's early life were the years 1917-18 when his father, due to his office, had to take disciplinary

action against the president of the college who was charged with sexual misconduct. Though his actions had received widespread supported at the time and were vindicated later, the powers-that-be dismissed him from his post during the summer of 1917. Finally, Parsons has spent a year in his youth in Germany. (Camic 1991, p. xi)

Parsons's academic career demonstrated his almost boundless intellectual curiosity. He shared an interest in both the natural and social sciences, started by studying biology (Parsons 1970, p. 826), and even completed a non-clinical (psychoanalytical) training (Parsons 1981, p.185, fn.4). Within the social sciences, his background formation was in institutional economics, to which he was initiated by the lectures of Walton Hamilton and Clarence Ayres, but he soon mastered neoclassical economics, before turning to sociology. His thinking was also strongly influenced by philosophers like Whitehead and Henderson, the chemist James B. Conant and later by the social insect biologist Alfred Emerson.

Such a variety of interests and knowledge is evidently a main asset for a social theorist. However, the manner in which Parsons went through intellectual trajectory was problematic in two senses. The first problem is related to the way Parsons changed his disciplinary allegiances, and it can be best seen in comparison with the case of Max Weber. Weber was struggling with the need of understanding his age, and was pushing the disciplines he encountered to their utmost limits. Once their utility was exhausted, he left them abruptly, as a matter of conscious decision. This enabled him to build later explicitly upon the conceptual instruments acquired earlier, while at the same time, in his methodological essays, he tried to escape the mental framework they imposed on him (Factor and Turner 1994). Parsons, on the other hand, rather slipped out first of biology, then from economics, never clarifying the reasons for change for himself (1970, p. 834); he even may have broken with his religious affiliations in the same way (Wearne 1989, p. 22). In this way, never settling the matter with his past, he left ghosts behind

that did not fail to haunt him later, returning in unexpected moments as the "answers".

Second, the variety of interests resulted in a highly eclectic approach. A wide range of curiosity and a synthetic mind is not an unmixed blessing. Parsons's account of the range of his interests gives a peculiar reading. Within the short span of two full pages (1970, pp. 829-31), he lists an enormous variety of fields that are far from being complementary, including biology, Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* , Weber's *Wissenschaftslehre* , with a particular emphasis on subjective meaning and *Verstehen* , Whitehead on the nature of experience, Conant (a chemist) on the nature of science, Schumpeter (an economist), Henderson and Pareto on "system", and elaborating on further medical and bilogical influences. One should recall the point that the section was not on his intellectual formation and wanderings, but specifically on *Structure* , entitled "A First Major Synthesis". It simply does not add up to a coherent, dogged intellectual pursuit of a fundamental problem, related to (modern) society. Limiting remarks to the most evident point, an emphasis on subjective meaning and *Verstehen* is simply incompatible with systematisation of human behavior on the basis of models borrowed from biology. Both undertakings may be legitimate, but they can hardly be pursued within the same project. Parsons seems to have picked up everything which he encountered and which stimulated his exceptional intellect, (41) and at the end was trying fit all of this together in a system, creating an artificial synthesis whose foundations were laid down in the subjective, autobiographical components of his interests, buried under the generalising language of the synthesis. It is necessary, therefore, to go beyond his account and restore the exact experiential context.

The major formative experience of Parsons's career was his two-year trip in Europe. The first year was spent at the LSE, where he met Hobhouse, Laski, Cannon, Tawney, Ginsberg and, most importantly, Malinowski. However, the by far more significant experience was the year spent in Heidelberg, where he almost immediately ran into the Weber of the *Protestant Ethic* . Since that

moment, it is usually assumed that the major formative influence for Parsons has been Weber. However, one should immediately point out that concerning the circumstances of this experience, Parsons was rather close to Durkheim. Just like the latter, he traveled to Germany for a rather short period, and was therefore not much able to gain a distance, in his case to separate Weber from the background. Moreover, his own formation showed a lot of similarity to the fundamental encounters of Durkheim. Parsons was educated in the tradition of Institutional Economics, a school very strongly rooted in the German historical school, exactly in the traditions of Roscher, Schmoller and Wagner that Durkheim found so intriguing in Germany and to which Weber had also belonged earlier, but from which he later distanced himself. Also, just like Durkheim, he had a strong interest in the "social question", rooted in concerns derived from childhood, in a religious setting (Wearne 1989, pp. 11-18), but a concern that they soon displaced toward an interest that was both theoretically and practically more encompassing (the whole society, the nation, the normative-integrative moral system).

Germany left such a strong impression on Parsons that he decided not to search a PhD in the States and finish a degree in Heidelberg. The topic was a study of the German authors he encountered - Brentano, Sombart, Marx, and especially Weber. He defended his thesis in July 1927, returning after an absence of a year. The first works he published upon his return to the States were all connected to this German experience. These were the two parts of Chapter Three of his dissertation, published in 1928-29, and the translation of the *Protestant Ethic* that he discussed with Marianne Weber during his summer 1927 return trip to Heidelberg (Camic 1991, p. xxvii).

Parsons's first writing on Weber provides remarkable insights into the manner in which Parsons has received Weber. The general presentation shows similarities to Durkheim's early texts. Just like Durkheim, Parsons concentrated on the historical school on the one hand and Marx and socialism on the other. Furthermore, his

main aim was not critical examination, only the introduction of unknown ideas to the American public. (42)

The first part of the article, the one that was published in 1928, was restricted to the discussion of Sombart and Marx. Weber was the topic of the second, 1929 installment. The discussion could not have had a more promising starting point. Far from reducing Weber to the *Protestant Ethic* , Parsons introduced the full scope of Weber's investigations into the sociology of world religions in the very first paragraph. In the immediately following sentence, he makes the point, referring to the memorial speech of Jaspers, that even in these studies, Weber never forgot from sight the fundamental issues of his present. The article goes on the discuss the basic categories of Weber's thought, following closely Weber's two most important mature introductions, the 'Author's Introduction' and the 'Basic Categories', and even makes references to Weber's study on the Agrarian Sociology of Antiquity. However, soon, on the bottom of page 24 and the top of page 25, just after correctly individuating Weber's interest as being concerned with the source of the "common characteristics of all the principal features of modern society ... their peculiar type of rationality", which is almost a verbatim quote from the crucial section of the 'Author's Introduction' (p. 26), a new concept is introduced: bureaucracy.

Given the matter of fact consensus concerning the importance this concept possesses for Weber's work, one would be inclined to say that finally, after all these references to ancient history, Weber (and Parsons) are back on target. However, I would claim that it is exactly here that Parsons goes astray. The attack against the conventional reading of Weber must start at its center, the alleged centrality of "bureaucracy" and "bureaucratisation" for Weber's work. No matter how strange it may sound, the word does not appear in the 'Author's Introduction', though this text was central for Weber, as he took an extreme care in finishing it. The understanding of the significance of this text has been hindered, and the proposition of the bureacratisation thesis at the same time, has been furthered, by two small mistakes made by Parsons

that together, and with their consequences, had a rather major reifying effect.

First, Parsons has decided to publish the 'Author's Introduction', a text written in 1919-1920 as the Preface to all three volumes of the GARS, together with only the *Protestant Ethic* . The problem here is not simply that in this way, the authorial intentions were disregarded in a particularly blatant manner; not even that it gave rise to the frequently committed error that the 1920 Preface was assumed to have been written in 1905 (Nelson 1974), or that it separated this text from Weber's other two important late introductory essays that were eventually published by Gerth and Mills. The error was even more fundamental in a sense that has become visible only with the help of the recently published letters. On this basis, it is evident that for about fifteen years, in spite of the repeated insistence and urging of his publisher, Weber has refused to republish the *Protestant Ethic* in a book form. He came to the realisation that the book cannot stand by itself, being too open to misinterpretation, due partly to the fact that in the book Weber was not able to define his problem in an unambigous manner. Therefore, he needed a clearer definition of his problem, and the inclusion of a larger body of supporting material. He worked fifteen years to fill these exigencies, writing first a series of anticritical essays in which, as Wilhelm Hennis has shown, his major purpose was the specification of his underlying problem; then worked for four years on a series of essays on the WEWR; then wrote two major, synthetic pieces trying to summarise the main purpose of these essays (the *Einleitung* and the *Zwischenbetrachtung*); then worked a further four years on the preparation of his substantive essays for publication in the *Archiv* ; and finally, when deciding that now time was ripe for their joint publication together in a book form - this was the real publication of the second edition of the *Protestant Ethic* -, he wrote another summary essay, the *Vorbemerkung* , a "second order reflection" (Tenbruck 1980, p. 348, fn 29) in which he provided the "master key" (Nelson 1974) about how the whole thing belonged together. By publishing only this final summary analysis with the *Protestant Ethic* , Parsons has not only "cut" a large work into a

more "manageable" size, but simply did exactly what Weber has absolutely refused to do - to publish a separate edition of the *Protestant Ethic* only; and he even worsened this by adding to it the misleading late Preface. The fact that he has committed this serious error with the explicit consensus of Marianne Weber only adds to the puzzle.

Second, this error has been worsened by another problem, the Parsonian invention about the "iron cage". This mistranslation has given place to a small discussion in social theory (Kent, 1983, Tiryakian, 1981). The problem is more than a minor philological matter, as it fits into a general pattern: the manner in which the special autobiographical angle from which Parsons has read Weber, through his selections, translations and interpretations, became the established tradition in sociology.

However, the perplexity does not end here. One element is still missing, and it may be the decisive source. Autobiographical perspectives may distort the manner in which a book is read, but they do not put in it something that is not there. The *Protestant Ethic* does not contain a bureaucratisation thesis, so Parsons could not have given it excessive weight. The issue raises the further problem concerning the exact source of the thesis. For this, one may first turn to Weber's other main work, *Economy and Society*.

Surprisingly, one finds that though the concept of bureaucracy does appear in the book, references to it are unemphatic. It does not enter the conceptual introduction. Even more importantly, it fails to appear in the central sections about power, domination, and legitimacy. In the whole Part One, the section Weber has prepared for publication with so much care in 1918-20, 'bureaucracy' receives only a passing treatment, mostly reduced to a small section entitled 'Legal authority with a bureaucratic administrative staff' (pp. 217-26). The concept was discussed in more detail in Part Two, the earlier, more descriptive-historical manuscript, completed in 1911-13. However, when in 1918-20 Weber has reworked his material, with the explicit aim of generalisation and abstraction, he failed to give much weight to

'bureaucracy'. How can the singular emphasis given to this concept in "Weberian sociology" be explained?

The reason is simple. It is given by two names: Robert Michels and Alfred Weber. First, Weber had a very specific source in his discussion of bureacracy in the writings of Michels. Michels, a former member and prospective young ideologist of the German Social Democratic Party has become disillusioned with the party around 1907, largely under the influence of Max Weber. He realised that his party, instead of working on the salvation of the working class, was developing into a huge bureaucratic machine. On the basis of this experience, he wrote his famous work (Michels 1911) that is still a classic in political science; and later he changed his political allegiances so radically that he ended up endorsing Italian fascism. Michels was closely in touch with Weber before and after the disillusionment and during the writing of the book. The letters Weber wrote to Michels are among the most important ones he has ever written. Michels has amply acknowledged Weber's contribution, as the dedication of the first edition attests. Weber acknowledged the merits of the book and used some of the results, even something of its the general outlook, for his own work. In the early manuscript, written just after the publication of Michels's book, he used the concept of bureaucracy extensively. However, Weber was also quite critical of Michels. (Scaff 1981) He considered the position of Michels as one-sided, and thought that he was on the wrong track in pressing for the problem of democracy. Therefore, in his more mature version, he reduced the problem of bureaucracy to one of the - no doubt important and interesting - characteristics of modernity, and of political organisation in general. (43)

Were this the case, somebody had to put, by force, the concept of bureaucracy at the center of Weber's interests. This feat was accomplished by Alfred Weber. First, there are some indications that the theory of bureucratisation and value freedom was central for the way Alfred Weber represented his brother's thought in the 1920s and 1930s. Second, there is a particularly good experiential reason for this. These were the two major debates in the Verein,

the main point of contact between the two Weber brothers, which pitted Gustav Schmoller, Alfred's teacher, and Max Weber, his older brother, against each other (Demm 1987). Such an encounter could not failed to have impressed Alfred Weber. However, third, these were exactly the issues where Alfred Weber, though originally supporting his brother, soon dissented from him. He increasingly lost belief in the possibility and desirability of a value free social science. At the same instance, he came to represent his brother ever more as a simplistic positivist. Similarly, he also preferred to identify Max Weber with the sweeping generalisation of the bureaucratisation thesis, avoiding in his work any reference to the word bureaucracy even when it would have been self-evident to use (A. Weber 1971), though the idea that bureaicratisation is a phenomenon where there is no distinction between capitalism and socialism was credited by Max Weber to Alfred. In this manner, by a single stroke, Alfred Weber reduced his brother's highly complex and nuanced theory of the genesis of modernity into a simple theory of bureaucratisation, substituting the complex experiential basis of Weber's thought with the much more simplistic disappointment of Michels in socialism. (44)

This misrepresentation was not without personal interests. Alfred Weber had very good reasons to downgrade his older brother's heritage, beyond the standard fraternal rivalry. These were Max Weber's evidently larger talent and recognition, his not only scholarly but also political influence, and, not least, their common attraction to Else von Richthofen, where Alfred evidently was only a substitute (Green 1974, pp. 55, 129-30). The hidden animosity broke to the surface at least once, in 1950, still with considerable strength even 30 years after Max Weber's death. When learning that a former emigré, Arnold Brecht, wanted to teach Weber's *Wissenschaftslehre* to his students, Alfred hit the table with his fist, exclaiming "What! You tell this old nonsense to the Americans! The first thing I tell my students is what the highest values are." (Roth 1985, p. liii). The major aim of Alfred Weber was to make Max look as simplistic and obsolete as possible. His two main strategies were to reduce him into a narrowminded

positivist, the second was to reduce his theory of modernity to the ideas of Michels. His success was almost limitless - though with a ironic twist: it was exactly due to this distortion that Max Weber has managed to become the undisputed classic and founding father of sociology. (45)

The success of this distortion had two reasons, The first was located in the general mood of times; the second in the particular conditions of the Weber reception. Concerning the first, the two misrepresentation perfectly fitted the mood of the time, characterised by two major tendencies: the consolidation of a new positivism in the social sciences, and the struggle against socialism. Weber's arguments for the separation of the interests of scholarly work from the direct inferences of everyday politics and ideology became a credo for the complete separation of research from any concern with meaning, relevance, and experienced reality; while his account of the emergence of modernity and capitalism became reduced to a simplistic thesis proving that socialism would only lead to the establishment of a bureaucratic rule. Weber became a trump in an ideological struggle in opposition to which he developed his whole work.

Before explaining the second reason of this success, it is necessary to present the broader movement of which Alfred Weber was only one part. In the introduction to his ground-breaking book, Wilhelm Hennis starts by listing four major withdrawals from Weber. His examples are Lukács, Marcuse, Leo Strauss and Voegelin (1988, p. 21). However, he failed to mention the "other gang of four", the much more influential figures of withdrawal, persons from Weber's closest circle. Alfred Weber did not act alone. He had "complices" in Rickert and Troeltsch, and even Marianne Weber herself.

The manifestations of these withdrawals happened literally the moment after Weber's death. Troeltsch was one of Weber's closest colleagues. They shared the same house for long years, though this ended in a bitter quarrel, of which they reconciled only shortly before Weber's death. Marianne asked therefore Troeltsch to

deliver the funeral speech. Troeltsch refused (Graf 1987, p. 219), as he was tired and tied up in other engagements. But it does not require depth psychology to realise that this was only an excuse. A memorial speech, however, was delivered a few weeks later in the Heidelberg faculty by Karl Jaspers. Though the substitution was not direct, it certainly had a symbolic value. Troeltsch did not behave much differently in print. This starts with the published text of his obituary in which he made the oft-quoted statement according to which Weber, with the singular exception of Paul Göhre, had no personal friends (1920, p. 44), only people with whom he had a shared interest - a claim which, apart from being questionable (one could mention Friedrich Naumann), tried, and with much success, to reduce the tragic dimension of loneliness to the choice or predisposition of being solely motivated by interests. Another well-known characterisation of Weber contained in the obituary, according to which he was "truly" a politician (pp.45-7), is also way off the mark and was similarly not without bad faith and personal interest. By downgrading Weber into a (failed) politician, Troeltsch could implicitly support his claims about his originality. To summarise this episode in the clearest possible terms, when Troeltsch was asked to deliver the funeral speech of his close colleague and friend Max Weber, generally considered the greatest German social scientist of his time, he politely declined the offer, but pointed out in writing that Weber was not really his friend, and was a failed politician rather than a scholar - a response that must have few parallels in history. Shortly later, in a collection of writings published in 1922, he in commenting the difference between their outlooks on evolution (Troetsch was an evolutionist, Weber was not), he gave an account that, according to Fleischman, was "full with sourness and indignation" (1964, p. 203).

The withdrawal of Rickert was just as prompt and violent. Five days after Weber passed away, Heinrich Rickert, his cousin and colleague ventured a remark to Karl Jaspers about "the tragic wrecking" of Weber's work" and "the slight chance of any influence of his insights". Jaspers was quick to respond: "If you think that you and your philosophy will be known at all in the

future, you may perhaps be right, but only because your name is mentioned in a footnotes in one of Weber's works as the man to whom Max Weber expresses his gratitude for certain logical insights". (Jaspers 1957, pp.32-3). Troeltsch and Rickert both had their special reasons. Apart from the obvious matters of scholarly jealousy and the issue of primacy, both must have noticed that they also served as "hooks" for the second and third major issues where Weber has decided to remain silent: the influence of Nietzsche, and the "non-Protestant", "mystical" or "narcissistic" work on self he accomplished during the anticritical essays.

Concerning the detraction of Marianne Weber, there is no place here for presenting a detailed argument. Dirk Kaesler (1989) has already announced a whole book related to the theme and is currently working on it. Only a few, mostly well-known facts will be collected together. The list is probably unique in the history of Western thought: Marianne Weber has destroyed all the letters sent to his husband; gave away his whole library, retaining only about a hundred volumes; managed to dispense with practically all the manuscripts, of which only a few were recovered; destroyed his experimental, "clinical autobiography" that Max Weber handed to Jaspers; and has evidently deeply interfered with the editing of *Economy and Society* (Orihara 1994). The *Biography* is indeed an indispensable tool for anyone studying Weber, and its value lies in information (pieces of recognition) nobody else could have provided. But it contains several grave defects, well beyond questions of mistaken dates and facts. In 1967 Michel Foucault started the general introduction to a new French edition of Nietzsche's work that he prepared with Gilles Deleuze by referring to a class of "cursed thinkers" whose life-work has been haunted by a suddenly interrupted oeuvre, abusive relatives weighing on posthumous material, and the existence of a "book" whose secrets one does not stop guessing. It is well-known that Nietzsche has belonged to this group, and the machinations of his sister have long been uncovered. But it is just amazing how every single statement also applies to Weber (and in a certain sense also to Foucault). Of course, Elisabeth Nietzsche-Förster was a "bad guy", Marianne Weber a "good guy". But if we

dispense with cartoon characterisations, it is necessary to realise the rather striking commonalities in the manner they handled the heritage of some of the greatest thinkers of the age that have fallen upon them. There is also at least some indirect evidence suggesting that Weber has been aware of the perils of such a possibility. In a very important 19 February, 1909 letter to Michels, he was pondering upon his own future, and specifically expressed worries about the fate of his work in the hands of his wife: "Da sie mich - das ist doch nun einmal ihr Schicksal - sicher für *lange* überleben wird *müssen* und ich gar nicht sehe, wie sie das *können* soll, ohne zu verkümmern, so denke ich z. Z. nicht gern an ihre Zukunft." (MWGII/6, p. 60). The conditions of this disclosure are again of vital importance. In this period, he was working on the third article on the Psychophysics of industrial labor - a particularly taxing undertaking, as by that time he has lost but all hopes in the value of the work, and felt like wasting away himself. (46) On the same day, he wrote another important letter to Tönnies, also on a similar, reflexive, meditative tone. This is the famous letter where he defined himself as being religiously unmusical, and added that he felt crippled because of it (p. 65). The final letter shedding light on the issue was written on 15 December 1910. Addressed to Gundolf, a main disciple of Stefan Georg, Weber stated there that in the past years, he was very often on the verge of suicide (pp. 741-2). It does not require much imagination to guess that the days just preceding 19 February 1909 must have belonged to this category. Finally, one should recall the observation of Elias, according to which Marianne Weber exercised a decisive influence on Alfred Weber (1991, p. 121).

The reason why the detractors achieved such an almost complete success, up till the revisionism of the 1970s and 1980s led by Tenbruck, Hennis and Scaff had a complex set of reasons even apart from the external, historical circumstances. The most important was the joint, mutually reinforcing influence of two factors. On the one hand, the detractors were extremely close to Weber. The authority of their words relied not only upon personal acquaintance but family membership. On the other hand, as Weber was not teaching practically for his whole career, he did

not have students who would have defended the "purity" of his views. Such "faithful" students are often ridiculed and accused of dogmatic sectarianism. However, they do serve a purpose, as they do prevent a completely everything-is-free attitude with the heritage of major scholars, help to keep close to the mark. Weber hardly have any such defenders.

Fortunately, however, he had one. The name has already been mentioned several times, as he came in close contact with all the detractors of Weber, practically the moment such a detraction has happened. He was Karl Jaspers. Jaspers never considered Weber as a positivistic sociologist, nor a student of bureaucratisation. He understood that due to his in depth empirical and historical studies, Weber was in fact the true philosopher of his time - not in the sense of academic philosophy, but in the classical sense of the philosophical life, staying always close to reality and experience. (47) The series of texts Jaspers has written about Weber, right from his memorial address (1921) that was based upon the way Jaspers has experienced the passing away of Weber, are unique documents and are unavoidable starting points for a genuine understanding and reconstruction of Weber's work.

Jaspers did not take up open conflict with the official guardians of the Weber heritage. He may not have had any willingness for fight, and the odds would have been against him anyway. Jaspers was in a Department of Philosophy, with a training in psychology, while Alfred Weber took up the "official" chair in sociology. Therefore, Jaspers did not have much influence over the dominant Heidelberg assessment of Weber in the 1920s and 30s. However, he had more success with students who only came to Heidelberg for a short visit and were non-sociology majors. Two of them are especially worth mentioning. They are Norbert Elias and Eric Voegelin.

Elias came to Heidelberg in 1922, Voegelin in 1929, both in the framework of a semester-long exchange programme. Both of them mention Jaspers as the most important encounter of their visit, stating explicitly that Jaspers introduced them to Weber (Elias

1991, pp. 49, 105; Voegelin 1989). They preserved the traces of this encounter throughout their life. This is visible in their long-run historical projects that focused upon the reconstruction of the interrelationship between political, social and psychological processes, resulting in the emergence of a specific personality or subjectivity type. Both of them used extensively some of the most important Weberian concepts. Though usually classified as critics of Weber, and being indeed relentless critics of mainstream Weberian sociology, a detailed study would be able to show that their main target was the normalised-positivistic Weber, and not the spirit of Weber's research, of which they have remained, maybe against themselves, the real guardians and followers until the end. (48)

Finally, the importance of Jaspers is not even restricted to his indirect influence. In a book written originally in 1949 (Jaspers 1954), directly under the impact of WWII, he developed the concept of the "axial age" and was thus able to pin down the underlying horizon of the works of Weber on Antiquity - a horizon that unites not only Weber and Jaspers, but also Voegelin, Elias, and even Foucault. (49) It is not accidental that in his late work, Voegelin has explicitly taken up and developed further the concept of the axial age (1974). It is also a very significant development that one of the most important students of Parsons, Shmuel Eisenstadt, under the influence of Karl Jaspers — and also Martin Buber, himself a disciple of Dilthey, the father of *Verstehen* , who was a regular household guest in the home of Max Weber Sr, and was discovered in his last period by Victor Turner (1982) —, returned to the path of the study of the axial age.

The crucial role of Jaspers as a "fertiliser" or "catalyst" of modern thought is a theme where there is still much to be researched. Here only one additional hint will be given concerning the possibility of such a role. Jaspers was not simply the only genuine follower of Weber in his generation, but was also a serious scholar of Nietzsche, about whom he has written one of the most insightful and influential, by now classic study. His book

Allgemeine Psychopathologie that Max Weber mentioned always together with Rickert and Simmel as having influenced his ideas most (1978, p. 3; 1981, p. 179) has been profoundly marked by Nietzsche. His whole work was therefore based on the dual background of Nietzsche and Weber.

Parsons, just like Voegelin and Elias, became attracted to Jaspers. His left a testimony about this in one of the last writings he has published (Parsons 1979). (50) Alfred Weber and Jaspers were both members of his thesis committee. However, as the structure of Parsons's first writing on Weber demonstrates, the reading of Alfred Weber eventually gained the upper hand. The history of sociology would have been different if this would not have happened. However, given the background of Parsons and the closeness of the modality of his experience to Durkheim, it was perhaps unavoidable that this be so. Parsons was bound to construct sociology, motivated by his short stay in Germany, on the basis of the book Durkheim wrote under the impact of a similarly short stay in Germany and the diminuished reading of Weber provided by his brother Alfred. But we are running ahead of the story.

The ascendancy of Alfred over Jaspers (and Max) is clearly visible already in the 1929 text. After the promising starting point and the ensuing mis-presenting Weber as a theorist of bureaucratic rationalisation, in the last pages Parsons criticises Weber for giving such an exaggerated, one-sided view of modernity (p.36). However, even more importantly, it is exactly at the moment when he is criticising his own picture that he decides to include a rare autobiographical allusion, switching to first person plural, disclosing the exact way in which Weber attracted him: "However exaggerated Weber's view of the dominating importance of "bureaucracy" may be, it certainly calls attention in a most striking way to an aspect of our modern society which we have all felt to be there, but which has received far less attention from the economists than it deserves." (pp.36-7) Parsons could have followed Alfred in mis-reading Max not only due to the quality of his background and his learning experience, nor just to the

institutional arrangements into which he had to fit, but because the manner in which he experienced his world was closer to the relatively simplistic experiences of Alfred Weber, Rickert and Michels, and not to the much more complex and subtle world-views of Max Weber or Jaspers. The irony of the fact is that due to the power of the biological fact of longer life and the sociological fact of institutional arrangements, the views of Weber came to be represented in a manner that placed them under the "wisdom" of an Alfred Weber or a Rickert.

After finishing this work, being a member of an economics department, Parsons turned back to economists, as his professional affiliations were still in between economics and sociology. During 1930-32, he wrote extensively on Alfred Marshall and Pareto. It was this professional situation that he turned into a project, aiming to write a book on the links between economics and sociology. The *Structure* eventually grew out of this question. It is therefore of much importance to map exactly its conditions of emergence.

First, in the way he posed his question, Parsons was much influenced by two ongoing debates of the American academic scene. As the theme has been covered in depth (Camic 1989, 41-6), the discussion can be brief. First, there was a general struggle of the social sciences against certain behavioristic claims aiming to deny any specificity to human action and purposiveness. People like John Watson claimed that human beings are merely reactive animals, and that questions of soul and consciousness, meaning and purpose are irrelevant. Under normal circumstances, such a position would have been a fine subject for an investigation in social pathology concerning its very possibility. However, the 1920s and the 1930s were anything but "normal" times, and the danger was real enough. The problem was especially serious for sociology which at that time was far from being a well-established discipline, and which had to fight for its right to exist even with the fellow social sciences like history or economics.

Second, as it is a common knowledge, the emergence of American behavioralism coincided with the spread of fascism and communism in Europe, and especially Nazism in Germany and Bolshevism in Russia elevated some tenets very close to or identical of behavioralism into state philosophies. (51) Third, such difficult times for the human and social sciences, especially sociology, coincided with difficult times for the academic career of Parsons himself (Camic 1991). Soon after his return from Germany, in 1927, Parsons became an instructor in the Economics department in Harvard, the center of mainstream economics theory. Though he accommodated himself, his background was in institutional economics, and therefore he was drawn to sociology. He felt himself torn between allegiances, lived both the attacks on the social sciences and the struggle between economics and sociology in a very personal way, both as a matter of intellectual and existential dilemma. Parsons got married and had three children in the period in which not only his job, but also his very disciplinary allegiance was far from beig settled. The dilemma was only rendered more acute by the fact that he had to work under hostile chairmen in both ecoomics and sociology. The situation has become especially tense from late 1932, when his official position changed from "nonfaculty" to "faculty" instructor, and he moved to the new sociology Department (p. xlii). It was generally felt that this was a probation period. This was when, after 1917-18, Parsons has entered the second "time of troubles" in his life. For evidence concerning the crisis, it is necessary to turn to his publication record.

Upon his return from Germany, Parsons, just like Durkheim, started to publish on German topics. However, soon after his return, as he belonged to an economics department, Parsons wrote about Marshall and Pareto, though from a sociological angle. The completion of the manuscript on Pareto in late September 1932 marked a break.

This event coincided with his appointment to sociology for a testing period. His urge to publish was therefore very high. At the same time, he was very much convinced of the value of his work.

All these concerns found an outlet in a crucial letter written to Frank Knight, the translator of *Economic History* , on 13 October 1932. (52) Parsons explained there his aims as establishing links between thinkers who were so far only thought of as different, thus already pointing toward *Structure* (liii, fn. 144); he referred to the pressure he was under for getting things published (xlii, fn 116); and, probably due to this contrast, was inexplicably depricatory about the past of American sociology (xxxix, fn.103). His attempt to publish the manuscript, however, was frustrated. As there were several books published on Pareto just that time, he failed to find a publisher. This pushed him into the attempt to finalise his plans about a general, theoretical volume, leading to an impossible plan, formulated in another important letter written to Knight on 23 January 1933 (Camic 1991, liv-v).

Parsons defined there the problem of his book as the link between economics and sociology. Doing so, he set up for himself a trap. It is not possible to discuss "the" links between economics and sociology as an abstract theoretical theme on its own right. Such an impass can be contrasted with the initial problems Durkheim and Weber faced in the analogous period of their life. Parsons was now exactly in the same position as Durkheim was before his trip to Germany, when he was pondering upon the links between the individual and society, and radically different from the sense of resignation Weber has felt in the late 1880s. Parsons defined for himself a scholastic - theoretical project that was simply not manageable. He was aiming high, wanted to write a global theory, doing away with all the predecessors (Camic 1991. pp. xxxix, fn.103; liii, fn.144), but did not know how to proceed.

As a result, as of late 1932, Parsons has stopped both writing and publishing altogether. There is some evidence that just like many others in an intellectual crisis, he was reading rather than writing; and not according to the inner logic of a project, but just picking up the books that got published. He has certainly read the 1933 book of Brinton, in which he realised that Spencer is now being forgotten and needs to be replaced, and which he would use in the first page of *Structure* ; he read the 1932 book of Robbins and was

interested in the debate around it that inspired him for a rejoiner. But there is no evidence that he found a way to start writing his book, though he had the project formulated already in early 1933, completed a thorough reading of Marshall and Pareto, and was much in need of getting things published. According to all indications, apart from maybe an Encyclopedia article, Parsons has not written anything from late 1932 up to late 1933 - exactly the period when he really needed to write and publish.

A private crisis undergone in that period had a peculiar symbolic value. It was already pointed out that the first times of troubles for Parsons coincided with the last year of WWI, though the events in the world did not enter into his horizon at that times. This was repeated exactly during 1932-33, the period of Hitler's rise to power in Germany. In spite of Parsons's evident interest in Germany, the events failed to make an impact on his thought that was focused on the purely academic-scholastic question of the link between two disciplines, economics and sociology.

It is necessary to be very precise and cautious here. First, the two events have important symbolic value, requiring reflection but not simplistic, moralising criticism. Second, Parsons has often been accused of living in the ivory tower of academic life, being allegedly "morally wrong" in neglecting the broader social implications (Bottomore 1969, p. 34). As opposed to this, he has been defended either in general terms, by claims about the legitimacy of the autonomy of academic work or, more concretely, by his involvement in anti-Nazi efforts after 1938 (Camic 1989, p. 38; Gerhardt 1993). In this debate, there is no question that Camic and Gerhardt are right against Marxist critiques. First, to state the obvious, Parsons was an academic, and the value of the autonomy of academic work is a touchstone of our civilisation. The events of the 20th century, the rise of fascism and communism, far from undermining such concerns, rather point to their irreplaceability. In support of Parsons, or rather the position attributed to Parsons by the Marxist critiques, one could evoke the attitude of the German philosopher Nicolai von Hartman who has completed his Aesthetics during the battle for Berlin in the last months of the

war, and decide to actively ignore the events going on around him. Second, the question of a moral and civic duty can only be formulated once the threat of an enemy has materialised. Parsons cannot be attacked even in this count, as his actions after 9 November 1938 bear full witness. It was on this date that, using the occasion of the assassination of a German diplomat by a Polish Jew, the Nazi persecution against the Jews got escalated, and that Parsons finally recognised the danger (Gerhardt 1993, p. 3). (53)

This, however, is not the last word. There is a genuine problem here, pointed out by the symbolic events. This, however, is not a matter of moral duties and rights, but lies at the level of sensibilities and recognition. One of the most important tasks of sociology concerns the early recognition of significant social trends, a premonition of changes. This is something completely different from a mechanical technique of prediction like econometric modeling. In this regard, sociology is situated in between art and science - as art only senses and expresses something that is in the air, intuites the novelty, while science only analyses phenomena on the basis of objectively given knowledge. The truly remarkable social thinkers, a Max Weber, a Norbert Elias or a Michel Foucault were able both to pick up something in the air, to recognise the symptoms of major social changes, and at the same time to map and analyse, in historical studies, the directions of the tendencies.

Probably due to gaps in his formative experiences, Parsons simply lacked this sensitivity and ability, and nobody can charge him with anything on this count. Beyond good and evil, beyond crime and punishment, he was simply part of the "great dumbness" (*die grosse Stumpfsinn*), described by Thomas Mann in the *Magic Mountain* ; a situation that has been characterised by William Butler Yeats with the following lines: "The best lack all conviction, while the worst/ Are full of passionate intensity" — both descriptions dating from the years around the end of WWI. The "failure" of Parsons was not moral, It is of a purely intellectual order. Its representatiuvity lies exactly there. (54)

Politics or the world outside did not enter Parsons's thinking in 1933. It was a different, and purely "academic" event that closed the crisis for him and after a relatively short time. In late 1933, after a gap and search of about a year, he read a book that suddenly focalised his concerns and changed his hesitations into a definite plan. The book was the English translation of the *Division of Labor* that has just appeared in very late 1933. (55)

The sudden effects of this reading experience are visible in every segment of Parsons's activities. The most striking example is the essay "Sociological Elements in Economic Thought" that was abandoned almost two years ago, finished in 1934 with a section focusing on Durkheim, especially the *Division of Labor* , and published in 1935. Around the same time, a long review essay about the book of Robbins was also finished and published in May 1934. (56) Shortly after completing this review essay, in the fall of 1934, Parsons started a major work on his own, 'The Place of Ultimate Values in Sociological Theory", the only early essay to have received attention (Camic, lxiii). He also finished several essays to the Encyclopedia, referring to Durkheim if possible (Parsons 1991, pp. 50, 119-21) Finally, and most importantly of all, it was in 1934 that he started to work on his magnum opus starting, not surprisingly, with Durkheim's early work (Camic 1991, p. lxv), and by the end of 1935 had completed a large section (p. xliv). (57)

Given the evident impact the reading of Durkheim exerted on him, it is somehow puzzling why Parsons never hinted in his recollections to this event. After all, if Weber had something to hide about Nietzsche, and if Durkheim had a reason to be reluctant about his German sources, Parsons had nothing to be afraid of the association with Durkheim. However, a closer look reveals a series of reasons why he could feel reluctant, even ashamed about this truth. Parsons has read Durkheim seriously only very late, missing a number of earlier occasions, and even then at first only in English.

The Weber experience was a sudden discovery for Parsons. He has never even heard the name before arriving at Heidelberg. This was not true for Durkheim. Intriguingly, Durkheim's name is mentioned already in one of the very first pieces he has ever written, a term paper for the seminar of Clarence Ayres submitted on 17 March, 1923 (Wearne 1989, p.26). At that time, he evidently only knew about the *Elementary Forms* . The next time he encountered the name in the LSE, in 1924-5, when meeting Ginsburg and Malinowski. Evidently, they also mostly referred to Durkheim last work, and were quite negative about it. Finally, he stumbled upon the name of Durkheim during his third main formative influence, in Heidelberg, where Jaspers was talking to him about Durkheim, and even in a more useful manner (Camic 1991, p. xxxix). However, he balked at all three times, and only realised the importance of Durkheim for his own project when he happened to read the English translation of *Division of Labor* . One could easily imagine the feeling Parsons may have had at that time, realisiing that he has "wasted" ten years by not picking up this book earlier.

There are two additional facts that lend some support to the hypothesis about the uneasiness, even "shame" Parsons may have felt about the matter. First, he was always quite touchy about suggestions that he has first read Durkheim in English. Second, in a letter written to Frank Knight on 25 November 1934 he indicated that the whole first draft of the essay 'Sociological Elements in Economic Thought', including its second part, was written in the Spring of 1933, before the review of Robbins and therefore before the publication of the English edition (Camic 1991, lix, fn.154). This, however, simply does not make any sense, would not fit into the serial order. The second section is fully under the impact of the *Division of Labor* , a book not even mentioned before. It would be difficult to explain how and why could have Parsons read suddenly this book in Spring 1933, and not start work on the other essays and the book immediately. The reasoning given on the basis of the late 1933 reading of *Division of Labor* is, however, perfectly congruent with the evidence. Moreover, both the series of non-recognitions of Durkheim and

the embarrassment Parsons had about this also correspond to the argument made above concerning the lack of prior touch with the major socio-political events of the times, and the subsequent effort to compensate.

In the previous sections the paper has shown that Durkheim and Weber, far from inhabiting different universes of thought, had many common elements in their formative experiences. However, instead of giving complementary formulations of the same basic thesis, their relation to this system of thought was opposite: Weber moved out of it, while Durkheim moved in. The point gains additional significance if we add Parsons assertion in his main thesis that Durkheim and Weber, together with Pareto and Marshall, shared a common movement in the structure of theoretical thinking (1968, p. viii). Even if the exact meaning of the word may have been slightly different in the two cases, the sense of the underlying metaphor requires that individuals actually moving in the opposite direction not be considered as part of the same "movement". Therefore, their simple synthesis was based on a fundamental error, and this meant the reduction of Weber into the exact framework of thought he worked so hard to overcome. (58) We have seen the manner in which Parsons nevertheless integrated Durkheim and Weber. Now, it is necessary to give an explanation for the huge effect he succeeded to make.

In a certain sense, concerning the external circumstances, such an explanation is almost superfluous. The situation was very ripe for such a synthetic work. Sociology was fighting for its right to exist in the U.S. and was looking for the proper tradition to which it could attach itself ever since the beginning. Albion Small, the first chairperson of the first American sociology department attempted to lay down the foundations already in 1909 (Small 1909). The attempt was in a way even remarkably close to Durkheim and Parsons. Small was a student of Schmoller and Adolf Wagner, and made the claim that the true ancestor of sociology was — the *Polizeiwissenschaft* ... . Still, Small, like others after him, failed to succeed. The presence of an external "need" does not explain why

it was exactly the book of Parsons that accomplished the feat. It is necessary to look at its intrinsic qualities.

One may argue that this was solely due to the book's merits, its "truth". Concerning merits, the power of Parsons's theoretical mind is beyond doubt. But it is also a commonplace to complain about the tediousness of the book that makes its reading a particularly difficult exercise. There is no question that the book is much less used effectively than the classic work of the "founding fathers". Furthermore, the connection between Durkheim and Weber established there was certainly ingenous - the only problem being that it was not only not "true", but was based on a mistaken identification. The question therefore remains: why has the book become so famous and successful? How can its powerful effect be explained?

There are two names whose presence largely contributed to the book's success, making the "necessary and useful error" it committed for sociology by forcing Durkheim and Weber together into a reality. These are Jaspers and — Nietzsche. The first name, given the previous account, is less surprising. The work of Parsons still contained the spark, the stamp of Jaspers, even though it was well covered by the influence of Alfred Weber. Parsons spoke highly of the lectures of Jaspers (1970, p. 876, fn.10; 1979), while according to Elias, Alfred Weber was not a brilliant speaker (1991, p. 145). The presence of Jaspers in the work of Parsons has also been recognised by Wearne (1989, pp. 42-3). This gave it a value that has been all but lost in the writings of the Parsonian school, until the much later rediscovery of Jaspers by Eisenstadt.

The second name is more surprising. Parsons, of course, not only has never referred to Nietzsche, but has not used his ideas in his works at all. And still, Nietzsche was present in a certain manner in the *Structure* , and even in a very prominent place. Previous commentators, whether laudatory or critical, overlooked a crucial element, the dramatic, stage-like self-presentation of the start of the book. They failed to pin down its extra performative force. This omission is quite surprising, as the book does have a very

peculiar and powerful starting point. In spite of all its length and tediousness, it starts as a detective story, by introducing a murder - and a highly peculiar one at that.

The first sentences are a direct quotation from a 1933 book by Crane Brinton, the Harvard historian (1898-1968). It starts with the by now famous question, ""Who now reads Spencer?"" (p. 3), and goes on to state that Spencer was a believer of the God of Evolution who now has betrayed him. Parsons immediately paraphrases these statements, using startling expressions, into the "verdict" of a "coroner", ""Dead by suicide or at the hands of person or persons unknown"", and defines the problem of the book in the following way: "Spencer is dead. But who killed him and how?"

The second paragraph maintains the suspense at the level of a detective story. It contains words like "dead", "stir", ""crime"", "done to death", "died". But it also gives a further indication. The case of Spencer, his death was only the "typical representative" of a more general phenomenon. This suggests a mass murder, as opposed to a simple crime. But the way Parsons is proceeding in the third paragraph is even more startling. He first identifies the murderer as a jealous god, Evolution. This god was Spencer's "own god", already identified as such by Brinton and repeated by Parsons in the fourth paragraph. However, it is exactly this god of Evolution, "also called Progress", the belief in a long linear unbroken process that has "become dubious" now. Spencer, therefore, was killed by his own god - but in the same act, as it was already alluded to by Parsons, in the first paragraph, this god himself has also died. Parsons may have written an undecently long book, but at least has indeed started it in a powerful, startling manner - by a Nietzschean thesis about the death of God.

Anybody perplexed by such a claim should only re-read carefully the first few pages of the introduction. But there is additional evidence of support. Parsons started the book by quoting Brinton. He also acknowledges elsewhere that during the years when he was writing *Structure* , Crane Brinton was part of the junior

faculty group that met regularly (1970, p. 833). But Crinton published in 1940 and 1941 two books on Nietzsche. His work has been received well even by Eric Voegelin, in his otherwise scathing criticism of the contemporary American perceptions on Nietzsche (Voegelin, 1944, p. 201, fn.53, and p. 202, fn.55). It does not require much imagination to argue that Nietzsche and the "death of god" must have been discussed during some of these faculty meetings. Parsons has in all probability never referred to Nietzsche in print, and may not have been using him on purpose. The connection, through the "medium" of Brinton, was probably unintended - but may have largely contributed to the powerful effect the book ended up having.

There are a further series of facts that support this possibility. Nietzsche's thesis is remarkably close to the core of the argument of Robertson Smith about the sacrificial origins of religion in the killing and consuming of their god in the form of a sacred animal. It has already been pointed out how elementary an effect this image had on Durkheim. We may add the similar influence on Freud - the third major figure in the career of Parsons. And he was not alone in this feeling - the "death of god" was the most intriguing, challenging, harrowing thesis of the age, expressing the mood of the times in a particularly poignant manner. Whether one was for or against it, hardly anyone could subtract oneself from its emotional power. If his Protestant upbringing strong pushed Parsons to the explicit, conscious appropriation of Weber's thesis about the *Protestant Ethic* , the same must have predisposed him to reject Nietzsche - though the latter took his revenge by providing the starting point of the book.

Furthermore, there is a direct link between Nietzsche and Robertson Smith. Nietzsche, as it is well-known, was a student of Ritschl, studying under him first in Bonn, then in Leipzig, between 1864 and 69. Now, during 1868-69, Robertson made several trips on the continent, visiting among others Ritschl. Though little known today, Ritschl was a highly influential thinker of the 19th century. He was a student of F. C. Baur, who produced the first monumental work on gnosticism, a fundamental source of the

ideas of Eric Voegelin. His school of liberal theology had an impact, through Troeltsch and especially Harnack, on the thinking of Weber. This influence was even exerted in institutional channels, as the followers of Ritschl were a major force within the Evangelical-Social Congress, one of the important groups to which Weber belonged, serving, together with the economist Adolf Wagner, as channel with the Verein. Given that Nietzsche was for years Ritschl's top student, the interest the Congress had in his works in the 1890s is all the more understandable. The presence of Ritschl extended even to France. In his book entitled *Science and Religion* , Emile Boutroux (1908), one of Durkheim's most important teachers, discusses five authors in separate chapters, of whom three are well-known classics like Comte, Spencer and William James, the other two being Haeckel and — Ritschl. Finally, in the United States, his ideas became the principal source behind the "Social Gospel Movement" to which the father of Parsons belonged (Spieler 1965, p. 2068).

The previous two points give an explanation in terms of the hidden, almost sub-conscious reasons for the impact of the book — a phenomenon that could be in some relation with the strong interest that Parsons would soon develop towards Freud. But there is still something to be added, concerning the theoretical viability of the Parsonian synthesis. Beyond the elements of personal recognition that explains the motivation of Parsons and the reasons that explain the "seductive" power of the book, referring to Nietzsche and Jaspers looming in the background, there had to be something in its theoretical apparatus, related not simply to the Parsonian conceptual innovations, but in the manner he handled the - incompatible - ideas of Durkheim and Weber that made the Parsonian synthesis practicable. It is necessary to explain the exact manner in which Parsons combined the work of Durkheim and Weber.

The resounding success of Parsons in this sense was due to a particular tension spanned between his use of Durkheim and Weber. As we have seen, the great experience for Parsons was the reading of the *Division of Labor* , Durkheim's first and most

obsolete work. This provided the basic framework for his whole thought. The synthesis has been rendered viable by the fact that into this framework was fitted the conceptual apparatus of the most advanced work of Weber, *Economy and Society*. The whole theory of social change, and sociology in general, has been plagued for almost six decades by the fact that the enormous intellectual mileage provided by Weber's conceptual apparatus has been assigned for "exclusive", "official" use to a 19th century positivist-evolutionist framework.

7. Conclusion: the founding experiences of sociology

This paper, one could argue, fits into a tradition of "criticism" or "deconstruction", its main aim being to question the manner in which the theoretical paradigm of the discipline has been formed. Such a characterisation, however, would be misleading, even false for a series of reasons. First, the paper did not question the truth content or the meaning of certain sociological theories. It was rather concerned with the taken for granted mental framework of classical sociological theory. Second, it was not just deconstructing or destroying this framework, rather reconstructing it, tracing it back to the experiential sources and contexts that stamped it. Third, the paper was based on a methodology quite different from (Marxist) critique or (postmodern) deconstruction, the possession of the truth about social reality or the refusal of the very existence of reality. It was motivated by the idea that thought indeed could and should be traced back to reality, but this reality is not identical to an objective world to be represented. It is rather given by the real experiences of concrete human beings with whom certain events happen on which they reflect using their power of reasoning and thus transform themselves, change their subjectivity, develop an own way of looking on the world, and formulating on these basis first a set of questions and then giving a series of answers. No matter how the further elaboration, systematisation and formalisation of these idea-answer can be disconnected from the original experiential basis, it can never transgress, nor even render visible the horizon (Husserl), the

taken for granted (Schütz) or the frame (Bateson, Goffman), that was given by the original *problématisation* (Foucault) or *Fragestellung* (Weber), in turn based on the engendering experience (Voegelin). For this, new experiences must happen.

Beyond "criticism" and "deconstructionism", there still remains a question about the significance of the findings. This will be the focus of the three concluding points. First, though Weber and Durkheim shared many common elements in their formation, their attitude to these was opposite. Weber left those authors in whom Durkheim found his approach. The similarities between the experiential basis of Durkheim and Parsons, however, are remarkable. Both grew up in a strongly religious environment, and dropped religion from their life, without a major crisis, and without ever exteriorising the possible influence of this factor in their life. Therefore, in both cases, this has come to "haunt" them later. Instead of religion, their work was explicitly driven by two other motives, also strongly present in their early background, the social problem and an unreserved faith in science, in itself and as the solution to the social problem. After an education in which they have come close to certain collectivistic ideas, including a slight socialist influence, they have both traveled to Germany in order to study, at a particularly sensitive age. This trip proved to be the major experience in their life. Durkheim found there most of the formative influences of Max Weber's thought, while Parsons encountered Max Weber mostly in its version expouded by Alfred Weber. However, the visit of both was relatively short (one year for Parsons, about six months for Durkheim). Such a time period is enough to gain some acquaintance, to pick up new ideas, but too short to gain in depth familarity, or to go beyond the first impressions. At most, one can maintain a "critical distance", based on prior convictions. After their return, both of them tried to spread and popularise the ideas they have found and were also engaged in major issues of career-building which prevented them to further elaborate, reflexively, their experiences. The major effect of his visit for Durkheim was the *Division of Labor* ; while for Parsons, this was eventually the *Structure* . This, however, was composed only after the reading experience of the *Division of*

Labor . The decisive encounter, for Parsons, was therefore not Weber, but the recognition of the similarity between the experience Durkheim had in Germany and his own.

The encounter with this work was not merely a cognition, but a recognition. The word has a dual relevance. It designates the encounter as an event, a break, and at the same time as a return, a revisitation and repetition, not merely something new added to what has been previously known. It also has a fundamental relationship to the heart of identity. (59)

In making the - false - contact between Durkheim and Weber, however, the mere recognition of an identity with Durkheim is not enough. It was also necessary to bring Weber into the picture in the same moment - he needed a catalyst for the spark, a "false initiator". This was given in the person of Alfred Weber, who not only misrepresented the work of his brother in a direction close to Durkheim's view, but also, in opposition to Max Weber, did share on many issues views that were strikingly similar to Durkheim's.

Second, though it is not possible to elaborate here all the consequences of this finding concerning the level of the taken for granted in sociological thought, it is possible to point out one that is certainly among the most important. This concerns the attitude of sociology towards the phenomenon known as the "individualism" of modernity, and the relation in this context between sociology and economics. As we have seen, this question was at the center of Parsons's interest when working on his book. Given the fact that Weber was an economist-turned-sociologist, his work could have provided a particularly appropriate starting point. However, Parsons relied upon Durkheim instead, and this was to have fateful consequences. Instead of placing sociology at a level different from economics, not questioning its statements but reflecting upon the origins, consequences and meaning of modern individualism, sociology after Durkheim became a discipline trying to compete with economics, denying the relevance of individualism on the basis of an emphasis on the universal constraining character of social norms, mixing in this way at the

heart of the discipline, in spite of all claims of scientific positivism, normative and empirical elements. (60) This led to the unnecessary and counterproductive dualism between the "social man" and the homo oeconomicus. The hostility to the phenomenon of individualism and the mixing of normative elements into the theory led to two developments: on the one hand, it contributed to the fundamentally a-theoretical attitude of empirical sociology; on the other, this lies behind the recent upsurge of rational choice theory. This theory is a mere backlash of the earlier emphasis on social norms. It does not provide a way out for understanding as, instead of trying to analyse and understand the specific type of individualism characteristic of modern society, it simply takes it for granted.

Third, the way out of the situation in terms of method is given by a return to the original Weberian project, incorporating those advances that have been made on similar lines, although often quite far from the orthodox mainstream Weberianism. In terms of content, the way out lies in a new type of synthesis between the approaches of Weber and Durkheim, focusing on their late works.

One of the further peculiarities of the Parsonian foundation is that it has put the emphasis on the early substantive works of Weber and Durkheim, even though their late works developed specifically in reflection to the earlier ones. The deficiency and one-sidedness of this approach has been lately realised even in mainstream circles, including Parsons himself. Thus, the massive project of Schluchter focused on Weber's late religious sociology, while Tenbruck (1980) has also proposed to put these writings into the center of attention. In some of his last writings, Parsons explicitly acknowledged his mistake and re-valued Durkheim's last work (Parsons, 1978). Furthermore, he also stated that in the 1940s and 1950s, two new developments had an impact on his thought (1949, p. xvii; 1968, p. xi). One was psychoanalysis, characterised by the works of Freud, the other anthropology, where Parsons mentioned the name of Boas, though indicated that there are no figures comparable to Freud's standing. Such a personal account can be contrasted by a theoretical assessment

about the major intellectual developments of the period. In *The Order of Things* , Michel Foucault claimed that there were two directions of research trying to break out of the "anthropological sleep" of thought, psychoanalysis and ethnology, and alluded to Lacan and Levi-Strauss as the two central players in the game. If we take into account that Foucault's late work can be called a "historicisation" of Freud, a genealogy of the "subject of desire", the connection between these two trends and the late works of Weber and Durkheim becomes even more evident.

In spite of this, very little has been accomplished in the integration of these two pursuits. There has been, however, important and pathbreaking works, starting from both directions. Starting from the Weberian camp, the late works of Elias touch both some issues in Ancient history and anthropology. Voegelin, in a different but related development, has become interested in his last years in paleology. From the other side, in their later works, anthropologists like Victor Turner and René Girard, starting from a Durkheimian background and rediscovering some of Durkheim's major critics that were neglected for long decades, turned again in their last works to study the origins of Christianity.

If these developments are put together and connected, they reveal the contours of a redirection of social thought with almost geometrical perfection. At the starting point, we have the dynamics of the works of Durkheim and Weber, with the new, revolutionary direction gained in the late substantive stage. These work span a tension between ancient history and anthropology, providing the task to pursue these tasks separately, with explicit respect to the understanding of the present, and eventually connect them. This task has been all but lost in subsequent developments — except for the fact that they have been taken up by their most important disciples, their true intellectual heirs, Marcel Mauss and Karl Jaspers. The identities and differences between Mauss and Jaspers again fit into a pattern. Mauss was a close relative and designated heir who, however, refused to play the official role prepared for him of maintaining the orthodoxy, realising its defects, and instead took up and developed further

the least recognised and most important features of Durkheim's work; while Jaspers was neither a close relative nor a designated heir, but maintained the spirit of the work as opposed to the distortions of the official curators, and eventually developed the thesis of the axial age that was not used by Weber but that provided a focus to the whole late work.

So far, in this section, Weber and Durkheim were often treated in a parallel manner. This, however, is not fully tenable. In spite of all the advances, Durkheim's late work still remained anchored in the early work, therefore in theoretical perspectives that were obsolete and which Weber (and Simmel and others) overcame or attempted to overcome. Therefore, the Durkheim "side", to be intellectually feasible and powerful, needed reinforcement. This was provided, again in an almost perfectly geometric manner, by his main opponents, Tarde and van Gennep.

Though the intellectual heritage of Tarde and van Gennep has destroyed by the revenge Durkheim and his disciples took on their intellectual opponents and their work became forgotten for long decades, in the 1960s and 1970s it has been taken up by two thinkers who developed the most important late insights of Durkheim into their conclusion. These were Victor Turner and René Girard. Both started their career in literary criticism, but both shifted to anthropology (Turner relatively early, Girard much later). Turner picked up and developed the ideas of van Gennep concerning liminality and the ries of passage, while Girard those of Tarde about imitation and desire.

All these developments so far stayed rather separate, picked up here and there if they became fashionable (Weber with positivist sociology, Foucault with structuralism and post-modernism, Turner with the counterculture, etc.), but more often rather forgotten. They represent, however, a whole agenda for social thought; a tradition that is there and that has its own history and even "systematicity", in the sense of constituting a precise configuration. The links are in the process of forming, in front of our eyes. The connection between anthropology and Ancient

history, something completely missing from the works of Durkheim and Weber, even of Mauss and Jaspers, has been made by Turner and Girard, while in his recent writings, Eisenstadt — who has been instrumental in calling the attention of sociologists to the works of Voegelin — has connected axial age and liminality (1995).

The approach combining anthropology and Ancient history constitutes a first step in giving a new direction to the self-understanding of modern society. Such a direction would all the more be welcome as this would represent a double challenge to a major complacency of our age: the conviction that we are so different from all other societies that neither the evidence of other cultures, nor our own past is relevant any longer for our problems. The contrast with the evidence of both Ancient history and anthropology, on the other hand, as both Weber and Durkheim tried to indicate separately, does provide a way to map and situate ourselves in a context - understanding the specificity and the limits of modern civilisation, beyond the mere proclaiming of its uniqueness.

Such a currently ongoing reorientation of sociology, based on the synthesis of a number of independent lines of investigation conducted in the century is, on the one hand, a genuine synthesis of the works of Durkheim and Weber, spanned by the tension existing between them, as Weber did had have much interest in anthropology and Durkheim never studied the history of Antiquity; on the other hand, it would not simply contest the mainstream approaches or provide an alternative to them, but can truly aspire to move beyond them, to a different level, just as the late substantive works of Durkheim and Weber added a dimension to their work that they were previously lacking.

If the events of 1989 taught a lesson to social theory, currently being discussed under the the question "why did the social sciences fail to predict the collapse of Communism?", this is that we are far from possessing a reliable understanding of our current

condition. Such an understanding cannot be provided merely by formal modeling or the collection of empirical data. It requires an explicit effort to understand the long-term concrete historical trends that have shaped us, that made us what we are, in contrast with the history and empirical reality of the other cultures and civilisations of our world. For such a purpose, it was necessary to gain an enormous amount of concrete empirical knowledge that has not been possible to accumulate without a high degree of specialisation. However, the specialised disciplines do not simply exist for their own sake - this is the "frog-perspective" of academic departmentalism -, but for the sake of the self-understanding of our modern world; a type of knowledge that is especially needed today. Time and again, there is a necessity of reflecting upon the results obtained, overcoming the partly necessary, but partly artificial disciplinary lines, and engage upon long-term personal projects that shed a particularly sharp and intense light on our condition. A way must be found to preserve the value and the message of such works; something like a "second order" or "meta-sociology", in the sense of Geertz (1973), that could, and should, take as its point of departure exactly the "second" Weber and "Durkheim", and to which the work (especially the mature, late work) of most of the thinkers listed in the second group would belong — a discourse that would resist systematisation, as it would not be possible to integrate such insights into a system, but would preserve the specificity of the thought of each of the thinkers, while using as the "inspiration" for concrete works the tension spanned between their writings, and that would not aim at a replacement of the existing disciplines but would be lateral to them, existing not in opposition to them but, in a state of symbiosis and not parasitism, would use them in order to get beyond, to move deeper, to help to understand what is going on with us at the moment.

In spite of the difficulties — both intellectual institutional — that such an undertaking must face, it is a challenge one cannot afford not to take up if one wants to understand the world of today and the stakes of the ongoing changes.

Notes

(1) One can refer here to the Dialogues of Plato and his most important and autobiographical Seventh Epistle, the letters of Paul and the Acts of the Apostles, the Confessions of Augustine, the Table Conversations of Luther, the Discourses and the Prince of Machiavelli, the Meditations of Descartes and the autobiographical character of his Discourse on Method.

(2) This does not mean that transcendence, universality, or method cannot be legitimate concerns. This depends on whether these are used in connection with experiences or against them; whether they subscribe to a fundamental "reality principle" in this sense. This implies that the most important, founding experiences are not "constructed" in the contemporary sense of social constructionism. They simple happen; are in this sense "primordial". It is, however, a reflection and elaboration on these experiences that creates those forms of thought and action through which the re-living of these experiences becomes accessible to others.

(3) In his excellent and much neglected account on the origins of Western individualism, Franz Borkenau discusses the first, old Norse occurence of using the personal pronoun "I" in front of the name of the person who is designated by the pronoun. This was the first declaration of personal identity. The source, strangely, is contemporaneous with Augustine (Borkenau 1981, p. 133).

(4) Toynbee gained the decisive idea for his magnum opus when, during a train journey across Bulgaria on 17 September, 1921, he recognised the identity of the fox-skin cap worn by Bulgarian peasants and the one used in the expedition of Xerxes (1954, pp. vi-viii). Spengler's work was based on his perception of the "halcyon days" before W.W.I. (1932). Huizinga gained the idea for his book during a walk in a given Sunday afternoon around 1907, described in minute detail in his posthumously published autobiography (Huizinga 1967, p. 564). Pirenne derived his idea during W.W.I. when he was in a German POW camp (1939, p. 9).

(5) In his first archeology, as Foucault explicitly acknowledged, the question of change has been left suspended (1973, p. xii)

(6) This is discussed by Voegelin (1978). For the similar concept of the 'front experience" in Wittgenstein and Patocka, see Monk (1991) and Patocka (1976/77).

(7) Let me illustrate this point with three convergent quotes:

1. "Roscher's position ... is a point of view which has been obsolete for quite some time, and no one in our discipline would waste his time criticising its *substantive* aspects today. *However, it would be a mistake to assume that for this reason the logical weaknesses which lie concealed within Roscher's position are in general clearer to us today than they were to him* ." (Weber 1975 [1903], p. 211, italics in original).

2. "The difficulty lies, not in the new ideas, but in escaping from the old ones, which ramify, for those brought up as most of us have been, into every corner of our minds" (Keynes 1964 [1936], p. viii)

3. "Thought exists, well beyond and well within systems and edifices of discourse. It is something which often hides itself, but it always animates everyday behavior. There is always a little bit of thought even in the silliest institutions, always some thought even in mute habits. Criticism consists in driving this thought out of hiding and trying to change it: showing that things are not as obvious as we might believe, doing it in such a way that what we accept as going without saying no longer goes without saying. To criticize is to render the too-easy gestures difficult" (Foucault, 1982).

Weber, Keynes and Foucault managed to escape these limits. Their opponents did not want to. Most of the Weberians, Keynesians and Foucaldians did neither. That is why the original classic works have remained just as fresh as they were at the time of their writing.

(8) Weber covered the political and the social part of the same process under the name of "charisma".

(9) These methodological remarks can be traced back to Nietzsche's *Genealogy of Morals* , Preface, no. 6. Furthermore, Nietzsche probably developed here some of the ideas of Ritschl and these, through Troeltsch and Harnack, may have influenced Weber's thought in another channel as well.

(10) These articles provide important insights into the possibility of connecting personal and civilisational identity, an issue paricularly relevant for especially the later work of Weber and Durkheim, and will be revisited in the conclusion. Two additional facts help to make this point especially pertinent. First, the manner in which the connections between Robertson Smith and Durkheim were connected to the question of Jewish identity has an exact parallel in the way Yerushalmi (1991) has recently explained Freud's *Moses* , as this work, just as *Totem and Taboo* , was to a large extent written under the influence of Robertson

Smith. Second, Franz Borkenau, one of the most fascinating and unjustly forgotten scholars of the century, a *bête noir* of the Frankfurt school, a former Communist official who has been among the very firsts who broke with communism and who became the first analyst and critique of totalitarianism, a person who, given his half-Jewish origins and the strongly catholic, Jesuit upbringing he has received was especially sensitive to the question of identity, has located in his posthumous magnum opus the decisive origins of Christianity and Western civilisation in the innovation of the dogma of the Eucharist, even comparing it to totemism (1981, pp. 407-10).

A concern with Jewish identity and the recognition of modernity have further links. If, following the characterisation of Baudelaire, Walter Benjamin and others, modernity can be considered as a "permanent state of transition", a special emphasis on the fleeting and the transitory, then the source of this state can be located in three archetypical figures, the monk, the pilgrim and the crusader that form a tight series. The pilgrim is a monk on the move (Dupront 1987, p. 370), while the crusades are "paroxystic pilgrimages" (Dupront 1987, p. 256), the crusaders armed pilgrims (Flori 1992, p. 454) or "monks at war" (Seward 1995). The relevance of these three archetypal figures for modernity has been discovered and put at the center of analysis by Weber, Dupront and Victor Turner. In each of these figures, there is a clear break with the past, a running away from home and the accommodation to a permanently transitory, homeless way of life. However, this state has another model in the form of the exile, a figure also of considerable importance for the thought of the twentieth century, and that has been also central for the stoics of the Antiquity (van Geytenbeck 1963, pp. 141-51). Now, in a fundamental sense, the state of permanent homelessness and exile has been at the heart of Jewish identity, ever since the symbolic figures of Abraham and Moses. Therefore, a reflection on Jewish identity provides a privileged access to the heart of understanding the modern condition.

(11) For the detailed plan of the reforms suggested in higher education, see Renan (1871, pp. 95ff). For a good collection of passages revealing his interests, see Deploige (1938, p. 122), also quoted in Lukes (1973, p. 86).

(13) In Durkheim (1975, vol.1, p. 409). The reference is missing in the otherwise reliable name index of the book.

(14) Mauss (1928, p. 506). This claim is somewhat problematic, as in the articles Durkheim's aim is to establish the science of morals

as something different from the social sciences, to which he assigns sociology.

(15) The possible significance of such a travel experience can be indirectly supported by accounts of other scholars who had similarly decisive experiences during their travels abroad, and who told their story. Lukes is using the example of Camille Jullian who traveled in Germany during 1882-83 with a similar purpose (1973, p.86, fn.2). But one could also refer to other, more significant examples. In their autobiographical interviews, Eric Voegelin (1989) and Jan Patocka (1981, p. 170) both underline the impact a visit in France and especially in the United States (from Austria) and in France and especially in Germany (from Czechoslovakia) had on them during the 1920s and 1930s. The case of Talcott Parsons will be discussed in detail later. Finally, one could also mention the names of Tocqueville and Weber, both of whom had major travel experiences in the United States. In his recent article reconstructing Weber's visit, Rollman (1993) makes the suggestion that a comparison of the visits of Weber and Tocqueville would make a fascinating topic. This suggestion could be taken up and extended. It would be worthwhile studying, in a comparative framework, the impact of travel experiences on the birth of modern thought - either by comparing the different scholars (the names listed above would already justify such an undertaking), or with an eye on the scholastic exchange in the Middle Ages or the early modern period. In such an analysis, one of the crucial variables must be actual biological age at the time of the encounter. Thus, all those thinkers who were stamped in a very definite manner were in their 20s at the time of the impact (Parsons was 23-24, Voegelin 23-25, Patocka 24-26, Tocqueville 26-27, Durkheim 27-8), while Weber was already past 40 when he went to St Louis.

(16) As opposed to this, in one of the rare articles covering Durkheim's early reviews, Giddens attributes to him the idea that only a sociologist can study properly the diversity of moral facts, and also that his major aim was the scientific study of moral facts (1970, pp. 140-2). In 1886-7, however, Durkheim was not a sociologist studying moral facts, but had the intention of establishing a science of morals in the pursuit of solving practical, social and national, exigencies.

(17) One may wonder about the reasons for Deploige's insistence concerning Durkheim's German connection, suspecting sinister motives. However, there was nothing of the sort. The book was published in French in 1911, three years before WWI, while the

English edition in 1938, just one year before WWII. Yet, there was not a single allusion to this matter in it. Deploige was a Catholic theologian, not a French nationalist. His main argument, based on a detailed reconstruction of French and German intellectual history, is that behind the German sources of Durkheim, there is noone else than Rousseau. According to Deploige, therefore, Durkheim has not picked up in Germany an "indigenous" tradition, but exactly a stream produced by the reception of the ideas of Rousseau spread by the French revolution.

(18) The original source is Baumgarten (1964, pp. 554-5), and is available in English in Hennis (1988, p. 146). Hennis also starts his fourth chapter entitled 'The traces of Nietzsche in the work of Weber' with the quote. His work has been a major inspiration for this section.

(19) The first allusion on the possible influence of Nietzsche on Weber were made by Heuss in 1958, Mommsen in 1959, and finally with more determination and impact by Aron and Fleischmann in 1964 (Albrow 1990, pp. 55-7). However, both Aron and Mommsen took up only one aspect of Weber's reading of Nietzsche, the same that has already been picked up by Friedrich Naumann in 1895, and - in the case of Aron who mentions Nietzsche together with Darwin - with considerable distortions.

(20) Thus, first, right after the second anticritical essay, Weber started to work on the new edition of his *Agrarian Sociology of Antiquity* , suddenly honouring a request of his editor that he was not able to meet since years due to his poor health. Second, almost the moment he completed the 'Anticritical last word', the second essay in the second series of exchanges, he became embarked in a long-run project on the economic ethic of world religions, never even considered before, while suddenly developing an interest in mysticism and the Stefan George circle. Third, just when he started to revise his essays on Ancient Judaism for publication, in the fall of 1916, he suddenly became able to keep public lectures after a break of almost two decades, as he found his "identity", recognising a high degree of similarity between his role and the Hebrew prophets, especially Jeremiah - a role that could be called a "recogniser", an "antiprophetical prophet" (Scaff 1989) or a *parrhesiast* (Foucault 1983, 1984, 1995), while at the same time having intense recollections of his childhood.

(21) Repetitiveness, as the previous examples show, has a special importance for effective meditative exercises or, to use the terminology of the late Foucault, for "techniques of self".

(22) To give only one example, the chronology brings together for each year the events without any monthly order.

(23) In the absence of any evidence, one could only conjecture that this could have been motivated not only by the experience of writing, but also by the reading experience of Marx. Even if Knies could have initiated Weber into Marx in the early 1880s, it was probably only when working on his thesis that Weber has made effective use of Marx. At any rate, the impact of some of the key concepts of Marx are visible both in Weber's dissertation and habilitation theses, though this view has been challenged (Roth 1971). Two comments must be added here. First, a proper assessment of the impact Marx and Nietzsche may have had on Nietzsche is often prevented by the presumption that such an assertion alleges that Weber thus has become a "converted" Marxist or Nietzschean, in the sense in which others define the meaning of being Marxist and Nietzschean. (In order to avoid this confusion, the paper will use the adjective "Nietzschean" in parentheses when applying to Weber, indicating that he read Nietzsche in his manner, and not according to the standard reception). Second, given the situation of the late 1880s and the association Marx's name aroused in "bourgeois academic" circles, Max Weber had very good reasons to keep it for himself that he has effectively used some of the works and ideas of Marx.

(24) I owe this reference to Scaff (1984a) Strangely enough, the article is missing from Krümmel (1974) that aims for completeness in the early Nietzsche reception.

(25) Concerning the reading of the *Untimely Meditations*, "a work that was dedicated entirely to a struggle with the epigonistic spirit of the time" (Hennis 1988, p. 151), see also Roth (1990, pp. 22-3), and Scaff (1984b, p. 90); with special attention being paid to the second meditation that "was certainly one of the greatest formative experiences" of Weber (Hennis 1988, p. 248, fn. 68). Concerning the reading *Zarathustra*, see especially the July 1894 letters written to Marianne (Scaff1989, p. 128).

(26) Discussed in Käsler (1988, p. 66), and Frank (1987, p. 9).

(27) This reference is also missing from the quite sloppy index of the *Biography*.

(28) Marianne Weber was a person of very delicate sensitivity and will-power (Green 1974, pp. 125-6; Elias 1991, pp. 120-1).

Except for the themes that she was not informed or considered as taboo, her perceptions and recognitions not only can and must be trusted, but are indispensable.

(29) Though this fact is well-known, even those who have emphasised the impact Nietzsche exerted on Weber failed to consider the potential relevance of posthumous publications. The only allusion in the literature to the correlation between the dynamics of Weber's work and the posthumous Nietzsche publications is in Fleischman (1964, p. 229), though the point was not elaborated in detail.

(30) Concerning the plausibility of the existence of a code, one could evoke Guenther Roth who stated about *Economy and Society* , the most "systematic" and "objective" work of Weber, that "the work is full of irony, sarcasm and the love of paradox: a dead-pan expression may imply a swipe at the *Kaiser* , status-conscious professors or pretentious *littérateurs* ." (1978, p. xxxiv). Concerning the feasibility of Weber engaging in such a game of not referring directly to Nietzsche, several reasons could explain his attitude. First, he certainly wanted to keep himself away from the Nietzsche reception. After the initial discussion in the early 1890s when the official and counter-official dogmatism has not yet settled itself, Nietzsche was appropriated on the basis of what was the worse in him (this much Weber has explicitly stated), and was assimilated into the extremist fringes of the contemporary gender and sexual politics, and social and political prophecy. Second, there was a personal element involved. Max did not simply refrain from "hurting the feelings" of Marianne, but probably did not want an open (public) conflict to break out between the two of them in the actual context of the Nietzsche reception, and given the huge disappointment the non-encounter of his wife caused him related to some of his most important hopes in his life.

(31) For two clear and important examples of distancing his very undertaking from the work of Rickert, placed at the start of two of his methodological essays, see the first footnote to the Prefatory Note to the essay on Roscher and Knies (1975, p. 209) and the first two pages of his essay on Meyer (1949, pp. 113-4). The circumstances are again particularly relevant, as Weber was gestating the idea of writing these two pieces exactly at the time when he wrote the two letters praising Rickert as a logician.

(32) Honigsheim 1968, p.19. Strangely enough, the name of Riehl is missing from the otherwise quite reliable index.

(33) It is not accidental that the only direct references to Nietzsche were contained in explicitly educative messages delivered to (his) students, like the letter written to Else in 1907 or the lecture "Science as a Vocation"; while in the *Protestant Ethic* , he used the Nietzschean expression "last men" without reference, while using quotation marks for a long "Nietzschean" sentence that was evidently not quoted from anywhere.

(34) A good indication for the analogy in terms of the use of Nietzsche's spirit as opposed to a mechanical imitation is that the essay on Roscher and Knies is closest to Nietzsche's fifth *Untimely Meditation* , "We Classicists", that was written in 1874-75, but was only published as an *Untimely Meditation* in 1910.

(35) The exact manner in which Weber could have developed this task in detail can be partially studied by differences in the subsequent editions of the *Will to Power* . Thus, fragment No. 462 selected as the epigraph by Antonio (1995) in his recent article analysing Nietzsche's "Antisociology" ("... In place of "sociology", a theory of the forms of domination. In place of "society", the cultural complex, as my chief interest."), also used by Fleischman (1964, p. 235), was published only in 1906, not in 1901. Even if Weber's approach was certainly not an "antisociology", it was an "antisociological sociology" — just as he was an "antiprophetical prophet".

(36) This happened in spite of the fact that Weber devoted a huge amount of space in the *Protestant Ethic* to this question. A short comparison between the ways in which Weber, Durkheim and Parsons have defined their problem can be done by comparing the amount of space each devoted to this issue. This can be easily done, as each of them start by giving "The Problem" as the title to the very first segment of their book. For Weber, this is the whole first part of the *Protestant Ethic* , published first as a separate essay, and extending to 60 pages in a text of 150 (without notes). For Durkheim, in the *Division of Labor* , it is the Introduction, covering 33 pages of over 400 in the first edition, but reduced to a mere eight pages in the second edition where the discussion of other thinkers has been cut out. For Parsons, in the *Structure* , it is the first section of the first chapter, not more than three pages in a text of over 800.

(37) About this, see fn. 20 above.

(38) For the first position, see Riesebrodt (1986); for the second, see Hennis (1988), Scaff (1989, pp.27, 37, fn.5), while Schön goes

so far as to claim that Weber and Schmoller "were so remote from each other that ... they could be classified as intellectual antipodes." (1987, p. 59).

(39) Combining the works of Hennis on Knies and Factor and Turner on Ihering, one could say that the originality of Weber lay in using the insights and spirit of Nietzsche as the substance in the framework derived from the works of Ihering and Knies that was appropriated through his university studies.

(40) It was exactly references to the work of Kraepelin that Sorokin (1976, p. 12) found missing in the contemporary discussions. Concerning such omissions, Parsons later claimed that noone has introduced him into Weber's empirical works in Germany (Lazarsfeld and Oberschall 1965, p. 194). On the one hand, this is a telling proof about the care with which his heritage was handled; on the other hand, however, given that Weber's role in the *Archiv* was common knowledge, one could have expected Parsons to devote more attention at least to Weber's earlier publications in this journal.

(40B) Thus, in the Preface to the 1968 paperback edition of *Structure* , he proudly and in detail enumerates the number of copies the book sold — an attitude that can be contrasted with Weber's refusal to reproduce the *Protestant Ethic* without an overall reorganisation, despite the repeated, almost desperate insistance of the publisher about its certain success. Later Parsons states again with evident pride that his analytical introduction to the translation of the first part of *Economy and Society* went up to 83 pages, and that he gave the lead-off statement in a 1977 conference (1980, pp. 42-3).

(41) One is reminded here of the epigraph Eric Voegelin chose from Augustinus for his 5-volume study of *Order and History* , spanning three millenia of world history and almost four decades of his life: "In the study of creature one should not exercise a vain and perishing curiosity, but ascend toward what is immortal and everlasting."

(42) The significance of this fact cannot be exaggerated. The secure establishment of sociology as a separate academic discipline, first with Durkheim and then with Parsons, was rooted not in a long, in-depth appropriation and digestion of different intellectual traditions, but in the popularisation of a so far little known intellectual tradition of another country. It is therefore

legitimate to wonder about the extent to which sociology has managed to go beyond this limited vision.

(43) In this case, however, it seems better to avoid the controversial point of the "originality" of the idea altogether. There are two reasons for that. First, during 1905-1910, there was a very strong interaction between Weber and Michels, and much of the eventual views on bureaucratisation of both thinkers owed a lot to this interaction. Second, however, the fundamental experience, in this case, was Michels's. This was at the center of his whole life and work, while for Weber, it was only an episode.

(44) A further proof that Weber's views on bureaucracy were rooted the "dark years" of 1905-1910, related to the debates with Schmoller and the association with Michels and Alfred Weber is that his writings on the psychophysics of industrial labor show marked affinities to the theme. Thus, in the concluding pages of his methodological introduction, elaborating suggestions made by his brother Alfred concerning the independence of the bureaucratic machine from the question of "capitalist" or "socialist" organisation, Weber describes the factory as a "modern workshop with its official hierarchy, its discipline, its chaining of worker to the machine, its agglomeration and yet at the same time ... its isolation of workers, its huge calculating machinery, stretching right down to the simplest manipulation of the worker" (Eldridge 1970, p. 155). This is almost identical with the descriptions provided by Foucault in *Discipline and Punish* , demonstrating that Weber was very much aware of the points which O'Neill (1985, p. 57) missed in him. The real connection between Weber and Foucault lies elsewhere. Shortly after finishing these works, they both realised that these were only intermediate products that they had to overcome, and within a few years, they both switched the center of their work to the Antiquity, embarking on the genealogy of the ascetic ideal and of modern subjectivity.

(45) *Economy and Society* itself can serve as further illustration of the hidden antagonism. Schönberg, the compiler of the original Handbook, was the other professor of Alfred (Demm 1987, p. 89). When Max Weber refused for a long time to become the editor of the new version, he repeatedly suggested his younger brother to the publisher — with no avail.

(46) See especially the letters of January 8, 1909 (MWG II/6, p.19), January 12 (p. 26) February 1 (pp. 46ff) March 28 (p. 84) and April 13 (p. 93).

(47) This concept has recently been taken up by Pierre Hadot, emeritus professor of the *Collège de France* . Hadot (1995) is very explicit that the idea of a philosophical life is directly opposed to the contemporary interpretation of the task of academic philosophy. In this way, we can give a perfectly coherent interpretation of the debate between Rickert and Jaspers. Rickert, like all scholastics, i.e. individuals who derive their power from the institutional arrangement of the academic system, was correct in his own way that Jaspers was not really a philosopher according to the strict institutional requirements. On the other hand, Jaspers in fact has been a philosopher in the classical sense of the philosophical life, as resurrected by Hadot. Needless to say, this point is not "against" institutions. Institutions, like all rules and forms, provide the frameworks for life and thought. However, the application of institutional rules always requires human judgment; and it is one of the fundamental tasks of social thought to identify those individual thinkers who, not being confident enough in the power of their own work and thought, have used the insitutional sources of power to get rid of their intellectual opponents whose power of thought and originality they feared.

(48) Two examples can shed light on this point. Elias and Voegelin have both used in crucial parts of their work two of those concepts of Weber that have been central for his work but have been disregarded in Weberian sociology. First, the Weberian inspiration of the work of Elias can be shown by his frequent use of the concept "stamping". For e.g. he used it four times in the last two paragraphs of the original Introduction to his 1933 dissertation, the *Court Society* (1969, pp. 66-7), three of which were preserved in the English edition (1983, pp. 39-40). Elias chose Karl Mannheim over Alfred Weber and followed him to Frankfurt. Weber is often referred to in the book, is taken as the point of reference with respect to the further advances are to be made - an attitude that certainly would have pleased him. Elias only developed his anti-Weberian polemics in England, for obvious reasons. Voegelin, in one of his most important expressions, *das Verbot der Fragestellung* (the prohibition of questioning), takes up another key Weberian term, *Fragestellung* . This concept has been developed by Weber during the reflection on the underlying problem of his works and the writing of the anticritical essays; see the letters of 13 October 1908 (MWG II/5, p. 675), and 12 October 1910 (MWG II/6, p. 644). It is contained in the provisional title of his methodological essay in the original plan for what became *Economy and Society* ('Objekt und logische Natur der Fragestellung'); and finally appears in the first sentence

of the *Vorbemerkung* . Interestingly, Ch. Turner (1992, p.176, fn.19) conjectures that the fact that Hennis uses the word *Fragestellung* in the title of the German original of his book shows that he was influenced by Voegelin. In any case, Voegelin and Hennis, those two scholars who in the 1950s and 1960s were the most outspoken opponents of "Weberian" sociology (ibid, p. 8), took up and used a central conceptual innovation of Weber of which it was even forgotten that it has been developed by him.

(49) There is a particularly revealing passage in which Foucault has recognised the affinity between his work and Weber's, due to the common stamping impact of Netzsche. In an unpublished section of an interview, Foucault stated in 1983 that "if Nietzsche interests me, this is only to the extent that Nietzsche for Weber was absolutely determining, even if in general it is not said" (1983b, p.14). One has to be careful in reading this section: it does not mean that Foucault has read Nietzsche through Weber — Foucault has only developed a serious interest in Weber after 1979 —, but a late recognition of the fundamental commonality of their undertaking.

(50) During the 1940s, Parsons and Voegelin were engaged in a correspondance (Gerhardt 1993).

(51) One could refer to the trivial example of the rough contemporaneity of Skinner and Pavlov.

(52) Camic (1991) quotes extensively from the letter in several places, though he is not combining the points and therefore its significance is lost.

(53) The claim of Gerhardt, however, that the book had an implicit political message (1993, p.11), cannot be accepted, or only to the extent that any book in the social sciences at that time that was not explicitly fascist in orientation probably had the same "message". This seems to be a superfluous defense of Parsons against attacks that are not legitimate.

(54) Parsons noticed the real Nazi threat exactly at the moment when the general public. Thus, writing about Hitler's intentions concerning the Holocaust, Gordon A. Craig states that "[t]he striking thing about the elaboration of this program is that it elicited no sigificant protests from the German universities or churches, from the civil service or the courts, or from the general public. Even critics of other aspects of Nazi policy were strangely quiescent before outrages like *Reichskristallnacht* in November

1938" (1996, p. 6). As opposed to this, Max Weber, and before him Friedrich Nietzsche and Hermann Baumgarten, already foresaw after (or even in) 1870-71 that something was fundamentally going wrong with German society. Of course, they did not predict the Holocaust, but there is a rather direct link between what they noticed and what eventually happened. This issue is similar to the debate that has recently started about the failure of the social sciences to predict the fall of the Berlin wall.

(55) The Preface of the translator, George Simpson is dated November 1933 (p. xi). Parsons himself acknowledges that the "clue" to Durkheim's work was *Division of Labor* (1970, p. 829), though fails to add that he himself recognised this exactly the moment the English edition was published.

(56) As Durkheim's name is only mentioned in two of the footnotes (note 33, p.170 and note 38, page 171), but not in the text, it is highly probable that the review was first written before the reading of *Division of Labor* , and the references to Durkheim were only inserted in last minute.

(57) In spite of this, Wearne (1989, p. 43) still locates the use of Durkheim's theory by Parsons as late as 1935.

(58) Giddens has also recognised this fact (1990, p.141, fn.18).

(59) Two further points could make this arguments about such hidden influences and recognitions more acceptable. The first is theoretical, and is concerned with the weight given to recognition in the recent work of Alessandro Pizzorno (1987, 1994). The second is that the assumed Durkheim - Parsons connection, in terms of recognition, extends, with an almost perfect analogy, to the Robertson Smith - Durkheim link. Smith first travelled to Germany in 1868, at the age of 22 (Beidelman 1974). His first paper, written and delivered orally just before his trip, was entitled "Prophecy and Personality". His first publications came out after his return. They bear witness to the German experience as, apart one or two papers belonging to mathematics, he wrote a few short pieces related to Hegel, while his first major article, published after his second return from Germany, is entitled "Prophecy in the Critical Schools of the Continent", and his first major book of research that, according to Beidelman, is "perhaps the least dated and most attractive of his books" (p. 6) discusses Hebrew prophecy.

(60) This is quite reminescent of the old meaning of positivism, which is not surprising, given Durkheim's background in Comte and especially Saint-Simon.

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